

THE
R A M B L E R.

BY
DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOL. II.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.

HOR.



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THE R A M B L E R.

No. LIV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1750.

Traditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ;
Tu fecunda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulchri
Immemor struis domos. HOR:

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When, lo! thy tomb forgotten lies. FRANCIS.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

I Have lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me, if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects which, though of the utmost importance, and of indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or if they become accidental topics of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtleties of reasoning, or elegancies of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

It is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation

of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes; detect the fallacies by which mortals are deluded; shew the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself and his auditors with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and shew the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears, and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon principles which he has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing, with the same ardour, the same designs; grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot keep; and swelling with the applause which he has gained, by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul, and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians; the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparations; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytic science. Every tongue can utter them, and every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease: there will there find Vanity divested of her robes, Power deprived of her sceptre, and Hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for whole

genius

genius; and, like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gaieties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage, he knew to be incurable. Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received, but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the languor of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and virtue surpass all external goods, might here have seen them weighed against each other; where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of Hope, and pants in the bosom of Suspicion, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority, and praise, lose all their influence when they are considered as riches which to-morrow shall be bestowed upon another, authority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the posed grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another

other state; and all conversation was tedious that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and to open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past; we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terror without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind the effects which the observation of death produces in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for by far the greater part it is wholly unregarded, their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulph of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death encreases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness which we feared for its malignity is now become impotent; and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed; and wish, vainly wish for his return; not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.

There is not, perhaps, to a mind well instructed, a
more

more painful occurrence, than the death of one whom we have injured without reparation. Our crime seems now irretrievable; it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate is fixed upon it. We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now cannot alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which the death of an emulator or competitor produces. Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy, had excellence to deserve our fondness; and to whatever ardour of opposition interest may inflame us, no man ever outlived an enemy whom he did not then wish to have made a friend. Those who are versed in literary history, know that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted antagonist of Cardan and Erasmus; yet at the death of each of his great rivals he relented, and complained that they were snatched away from him before their reconciliation was completed.

* *Tu ne etiam moreris? Ab! quid me linguis, Erasme,
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?*

Art thou too fall'n? Ere anger could subside,
And love return, has great Erasmus died?

Such are the sentiments with which we finally review the effects of passion, but which we sometimes delay till we can no longer rectify our errors. Let us therefore make haste to do what we shall certainly at last wish to have done; let us return the caresses of our friends, and endeavour by mutual endearments to heighten that tenderness which is the balm of life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries while repentance may not be a barren anguish, and let us open our eyes to every rival excellence, and pay early and willingly those honours which justice will compel us to pay at last.

ATHANATUS.

No. LV. TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1750.

Maturo propior define funeri
 Inter ludere virgines,
 Et stellis maculam spargere candidis;
 Non siquid Phœben fatis
 Ette, Chlori, decet.——— HOR.

Now near to death that comes but slow,
 Now thou art stepping down below;
 Sport not amongst the blooming maids,
 But think on ghosts and empty shades;
 What suits with Phœbe in her bloom,
 Grey Chloris, will not thee become;
 A bed is different from a tomb.

CREECH.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

I Have been but a little time conversant in the world yet I have already had frequent opportunities of observing the little efficacy of remonstrance and complaint which, however extorted by oppression, or supported by reason, are detested by one part of the world as rebellious, censured by the other as peevishness, by some heard with an appearance of compassion, only to betray any of those sallies of vehemence and resentment which are apt to break out upon encouragement, and by others passed over with indifference and neglect, as matters in which they have no concern, and which, if they should endeavour to examine or regulate, they might draw mischief upon themselves.

Yet since it is no less natural for those who think themselves injured to complain, than for others to neglect their complaints, I shall venture to lay my case before you, in hopes that you will enforce my opinion, if you think it just, or endeavour to rectify my sentiments, if I am mistaken. I expect at least, that you will divest yourself of partiality, and that whatever your age or solemnity may be, you will not with the dotard's insolence pronounce

1750. pronounce me ignorant and foolish, perverse and refractory, only because you perceive that I am young.

My father dying when I was but ten years old, left me, and a brother two years younger than myself, to the care of my mother, a woman of birth and education, whose prudence or virtue he had no reason to distrust. She felt, for some time, all the sorrow which nature calls forth upon the final separation of persons dear to one another; and as her grief was exhausted by its own violence, it subsided into tenderness for me and my brother; and the year of mourning was spent in caresses, consolations, and instruction, in celebration of my father's virtues, in professions of perpetual regard to his memory, and hourly instances of such fondness as gratitude will not easily suffer me to forget.

But when the term of this mournful felicity was expired, and my mother appeared again without the ensigns of sorrow, the ladies of her acquaintance began to tell her, upon whatever motives, that it was time to live like the rest of the world: a powerful argument, which is seldom used to a woman without effect. Lady Giddy was incessantly relating the occurrences of the town; and Mrs. Gravely told her privately, with great tenderness, that it began to be publicly observed how much she overacted her part, and that most of her acquaintance suspected her hope of procuring another husband to be the true ground of all that appearance of tenderness and piety.

All the officiousness of kindness and folly was busied to change her conduct. She was at one time alarmed with censure, and at another fired with praise. She was told of balls, where others shone only because she was absent; of new comedies to which all the town was crouding; and of many ingenious ironies, by which domestic diligence was made contemptible.

It is difficult for virtue to stand alone against fear on one side, and pleasure on the other; especially when no actual crime is proposed, and prudence itself can suggest many reasons for relaxation and indulgence. My mamma was at last persuaded to accompany Miss Giddy to a play.

play. She was received with a boundless profusion of compliments, and attended home by a fine gentleman. Next day she was with less difficulty prevailed on to play at Mrs. Gravelly's, and came home gay and lively; for the distinctions which had been paid her awakened her vanity, and good luck had kept her principles of frugality from giving her disturbance. She now made her second entrance into the world, and her friends were sufficiently industrious to prevent any return to her former life; every morning brought messages of invitation, and every evening was passed in places of diversion, from which she for some time complained that she had rather be absent. In a short time she began to feel the happiness of acting without controul, of being unaccountable for her hours, her expences, and her company; and learned by degrees to drop an expression of contempt or pity at the mention of ladies whose husbands were suspected of restraining their pleasures or their play, and confessed that she loved to go and come as she pleased.

I was still favoured with some incidental precepts and transient endearments, and was now and then fondly kissed for smiling like my papa; but most part of her morning was spent in comparing the opinion of her maid and milliner, contriving some variation in her dress, visiting shops, and sending compliments; and the rest of the day was too short for visits, cards, plays, and concerts.

She now began to discover that it was impossible to educate children properly at home. Parents could not have them always in their sight; the society of servants was contagious; company produced boldness and spirits; emulation excited industry; and a large school was naturally the first step into the open world. A thousand other reasons she alledged, some of little force in themselves, but so well seconded by pleasure, vanity, and idleness, that they soon overcame all the remaining principles of kindness and piety; and both I and my brother were dispatched to boarding-schools.

How my mamma spent her time when she was thus disburthened, I am not able to inform you; but I have reason

to believe that trifles and amusements took still faster hold of her heart. At first she visited me at school, and afterwards wrote to me; but in a short time, both her visits and her letters were at an end; and no other notice was taken of me than to remit money for my support.

When I came home at the vacation, I found myself coldly received, with an observation—‘That this girl will presently be a woman.’ I was, after the usual stay, sent to school again, and overheard my mother say, as I was a-going, ‘Well, now I shall recover.’

In six months more I came again; and, with the usual childish alacrity, was running to my mother’s embrace, when she stopt me with exclamations at the suddenness and enormity of my growth, having, she said, never seen any body shoot up so much at my age. She was sure no other girls spread at that rate, and she hated to have children look like women before their time. I was disconcerted, and retired without hearing any thing more than—‘Nay, if you are angry, Madam Steeple, you may walk off.’

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return to kindness or decency. My mamma made this appearance of resentment a reason for continuing her malignity; and poor Miss Maypole, for that was my appellation, was never mentioned or spoken to but with some expression of anger or dislike.

She had yet the pleasure of dressing me like a child; and I know not when I should have been thought fit to change my habit, had I not been rescued by a maiden-sister of my father, who could not bear to see women in hanging-sleeves, and therefore presented me with brocade for a gown, for which I should have thought myself under great obligations, had she not accompanied her favour with some hints that my mamma might now consider her age, and give me her ear-rings, which she had shewn long enough in public places.

I now left the school, and came to live with my mamma, who considered me as an usurper that had seized the rights of a woman before they were due, and was pushing her down the precipice of age, that I might reign

without a superior. While I am thus beheld with jealousy and suspicion, you will readily believe that it is difficult to please. Every look and word is an offence. I never speak but I pretend to some qualities and excellencies which it is criminal to possess; if I am gay, she thinks it early enough to coquette; if I am grave, she hates a prude in bibs; if I venture into company, I am in haste for a husband; if I retire to my chamber, such matron-like ladies are lovers of contemplation. I am on one pretence or other generally excluded from her assemblies, nor am I ever suffered to visit at the same place with my mamma. Every one wonders why she does not bring Miss more into the world; and when she comes home in vapours I am certain she has heard either of my beauty or my wit, and expect nothing for the ensuing week but taunts and menaces, contradictions and reproaches.

Thus I live in a state of continual persecution, only because I was born ten years too soon, and cannot stop the course of nature or of time, but am unhappily a woman before my mother can willingly cease to be a girl. I believe you would contribute to the happiness of many families, if, by any arguments or persuasions, you could make mothers ashamed of rivalling their children; if you could shew them, that tho' they may refuse to grow wise, they must inevitably grow old; and that the proper solaces of age are not music and compliments, but wisdom and devotion; that those who are so unwilling to quit the world will soon be driven from it; and that it is therefore their interest to retire while yet there remains a few hours for nobler employments.

I am, &c.

No. LVI. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1750.

—Valeat res ludicra, si me

Palma negata macrum; donata reducit opimum. HOR.

Farewell the stage; for humbly I disclaim

Such fond pursuits of pleasure or of fame,

If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,

As the gay palm is granted or deny'd. FRANCIS.

NOTHING is more displeasing than to find that offence has been received when none was intended, and that pain has been given to those who were not guilty of any provocation. As the great end of society is mutual beneficence, a good man is always uneasy when he finds himself acting in opposition to the purposes of life; because though his conscience may easily acquit him of *malice prepense*, of settled hatred, or contrivances of mischief, yet he seldom can be certain that he has not failed by negligence or indolence; that he has not been hindered from consulting the common interest by too much regard to his own ease, or too much indifference to the happiness of others.

Nor is it necessary that, to feel this uneasiness, the mind should be extended to any great diffusion of generosity, or melted by uncommon warmth of benevolence; for that prudence which the world teaches, and a quick sensibility of private interest, will direct us to shun needless enmities; since there is no man whose kindness we may not some time want, or by whose malice we may not some time suffer.

I have therefore frequently looked with wonder, and now and then with pity, at the thoughtlessness with which some alienate from themselves the affections of all whom chance, business, or inclination, brings in their way. When we see a man pursuing some darling interest, without much regard to the opinion of the world, we justly consider him as corrupt and dangerous, but are not long in discovering his motives; we see him actuated

by passions which are hard to be resisted, and deluded by appearances which have dazzled stronger eyes. But the greater part of those who set mankind at defiance by hourly irritation, and who live but to infuse malignity, and multiply enemies, have no hopes to foster, no designs to promote, nor any expectations of attaining power by insolence, or of climbing to greatness by trampling on others. They give up all the sweets of kindness for the sake of peevishness, petulance, or gloom; and alienate the world by neglect of the common forms of civility, and breach of the established laws of conversation.

Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated; and who, if their good qualities and actions sometimes force a commendation, have their panegyric always concluded with confessions of disgust: 'He is a good man, but I cannot like him.' Surely such persons have sold the esteem of the world at too low a price, since they have lost one of the rewards of virtue without gaining the profits of wickedness.

This ill economy of fame is sometimes the effect of stupidity. Men whose perceptions are languid and sluggish, who lament nothing but loss of money, and feel nothing but a blow, are often at a difficulty to guess why they are encompassed with enemies, though they neglect all those arts by which men are endeared to one another. They comfort themselves that they have lived irreproachably; that none can charge them with having endangered his life, or diminished his possessions; and therefore conclude that they suffer by some invincible fatality, or impute the malice of their neighbours to ignorance or envy. They wrap themselves up in their innocence, and enjoy the congratulations of their own hearts, without knowing or suspecting that they are every day deservedly incurring resentments, by withholding from those with whom they converse, that regard, or appearance of regard, to which every one is entitled by the customs of the world.

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There are many injuries which almost every man feels, though he does not complain; and which, upon those whom virtue, elegance, or vanity have made delicate and tender, fix deep and lasting impressions; as there are many arts of graciousness and conciliation which are to be practised without expence, and by which those may be made our friends who have never received from us any real benefit. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to learn; for who would want that love which is so easily gained! And such injuries are to be avoided; for who would be hated without profit!

Some indeed there are, for whom the excuse of ignorance or negligence cannot be alledged, because it is apparent that they are not only careless of pleasing, but studious to offend; that they contrive to make all approaches to them difficult and vexatious, and imagine that they aggrandize themselves by wasting the time of others in useless attendance, by mortifying them with slights, and teasing them with affronts.

Men of this kind are generally to be found among those that have not mingled much in general conversation, but spent their lives amidst the obsequiousness of dependents and the flattery of parasites; and by long consulting only their own inclination, have forgotten that others have a claim to the same deference.

Tyranny, thus avowed, is indeed an exuberance of pride, by which all mankind is so much enraged, that it is never quietly endured, except in those who can reward the patience which they exact; and insolence is generally surrounded only by such whose baseness inclines them to think nothing insupportable that produces gain; and who can laugh at scurrility and rudeness with a luxurious table and an open purse?

But though all wanton provocations and contemptuous insolence are to be diligently avoided, there is no less danger in timid compliance and tame resignation. It is common for soft and fearful tempers to give themselves up implicitly to the direction of the bold, the turbulent, and the overbearing; of those whom they do not believe wiser or better than themselves; to recede from the best

designs where opposition must be encountered; and to fall off from virtue for fear of censure.

Some firmness and resolution is necessary to the discharge of duty: but it is a very unhappy state of life in which the necessity of such struggles frequently occurs; for no man is defeated without some resentment, which will be continued with obstinacy while he believes himself in the right, and exerted with bitterness, if even to his own conviction he is detected in the wrong.

Even though no regard be had to the external consequences of contrariety and dispute, it must be painful to a worthy mind to put others in pain; and there will be danger lest the kindest nature may be vitiated by too long a custom of debate and contest.

I am afraid that I may be taxed with insensibility by many of my correspondents, who believe their contributions unjustly neglected. And indeed, when I sit before a pile of papers, of which each is the production of laborious study, and the offspring of a fond parent; I who know the passions of an author, cannot remember how long they have lain in my boxes unregarded, without imaging to myself the various changes of sorrow, impatience, and resentment, which the writers must have felt in this tedious interval.

These reflections are still more awakened, when, upon perusal, I find some of them calling for a place in the next paper, a place which they have never yet obtained; others writing in a style of superiority and haughtiness, as secure of deference, and above fear of criticism; others humbly offering their weak assistance with softness and submission, which they believe impossible to be resisted; some introducing their compositions with a menace of the contempt which he that refuses them will incur; others applying privately to the booksellers for their interest and solicitation; every one by different ways endeavouring to secure the bliss of publication. I cannot but consider myself as placed in a very incommodious situation, where I am forced to repress confidence, which it is pleasing to indulge, to repay civilities with appear-

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ances of neglect, and so frequently to offend those by whom I never was offended.

I know well how rarely an author, fired with the beauties of his new composition, contains his raptures in his own bosom, and how naturally he imparts to his friends his expectations of renown; and as I can easily conceive the eagerness with which a new paper is snatched up by one who expects to find it filled with his own production: and perhaps has called his companions to share the pleasure of a second perusal; I grieve for the disappointment which he is to feel at the fatal inspection. His hopes, however, do not yet forsake him; he is certain of giving lustre the next day. The next day comes, and again he pants with expectation; and having dreamed of laurels and Parnassus, casts his eyes upon the barren page with which he is doomed never more to be delighted.

For such cruelty, what atonement can be made? For such calamities, what alleviation can be found? I am afraid that the mischief already done must be without reparation; and all that deserves my care is prevention for the future. Let therefore the next friendly contributor, whoever he be, observe the cautions of Swift; and write secretly in his own chamber, without communicating his design to his nearest friend, for the nearest friend will be pleased with an opportunity of laughing. Let him carry it to the post himself, and wait in silence for the event. If it is published and praised, he may then declare himself the author; if it be suppressed, he may wonder in private without much vexation; and if it be censured, he may join in the cry, and lament the dulness of the writing generation.

No. LVII. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1750.

Non intelligunt homines quam magnum vestigial sit parsimonia

TULL.

The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality.

*To the Rambler.**Sir,*

I AM always pleased when I see literature made useful to the mind, and scholars descending from that elevation which, it raises them above common life; must likewise hinder them from beholding the ways of men, otherwise they are lost in a cloud of bustle and confusion. Having lived a little of business, and remarked how seldom any occurrence emerge for which great qualities are required, I have learned the necessity of regarding little things; and though I do not pretend to give laws to the legislators of mankind, or to limit the range of those powerful minds that carry light and heat through all the regions of knowledge; yet I have long thought, that the greatest advantage of those who lose themselves in studies, by which I have not found that they grow much wiser, might, with more advantage both to the public and themselves, apply their understandings to domestic arts, and store their minds with axioms of humble prudence and private economy.

Your late paper on frugality was very elegant and pleasing, but in my opinion, not sufficiently adapted to common readers, who pay little regard to the music of periods, the artifice of connection, or the arrangement of the flowers of rhetoric; but require a few plain and cogent instructions, which may sink into the mind of their own weight.

Frugality is so necessary to the happiness of the world, so beneficial in its various forms to every rank of men, from the highest of human potentates to the lowest labourer or artificer; and the miseries which the neglect of it produces are so numerous and so grievous, that it ought to be recommended with every variation of address, and adapted to every class of understanding.

Whether those who treat morals as a science will at

low frugality to be numbered among the virtues, I have not thought it necessary to enquire. For I, who draw my opinions from a careful observation of the world, am satisfied with knowing, what is abundantly sufficient for practice, that if it be not a virtue, it is at least a quality which can seldom exist without some virtues, and without which few virtues can exist. Frugality may be termed the daughter of Prudence, the sister of Temperance, and the parent of Liberty. He that is extravagant will quickly become poor; and poverty will enforce dependence, and invite corruption; it will almost always produce a passive compliance with the wickedness of others; and there are few who do not learn by degrees to practise those crimes which they cease to censure.

If there are any who do not dread poverty as dangerous to virtue, yet mankind seem unanimous enough in abhorring it as destructive to happiness, and all to whom want is terrible, upon whatever principle, ought to think themselves obliged to learn the sage maxims of our pious ancestors, and attain the salutary arts of contracting expence: for without frugality none can be rich, and with it very few would be poor.

To most other acts of virtue, or exertions of wisdom, a concurrence of many circumstances is necessary, some previous knowledge must be attained, some uncommon gifts of nature possessed, or some opportunity produced by an extraordinary combination of things; but the mere power of saving what is already in our hands, must be easily of acquisition to every mind; and as the example of Bacon may shew that the highest intellect cannot safely neglect it, a thousand instances will every day prove that the meanest may practise it with success.

Riches cannot be within the reach of great numbers, because to be rich is to possess more than is commonly placed in a single hand; and if many could obtain the sum which now makes a man wealthy, the name of wealth must then be transferred to still greater accumulations. But I am not certain that it is equally impossible to exempt the lower classes of mankind from poverty; because though whatever be the wealth of the community,

munity, some will always have the least, and he that less than any other is comparatively poor; yet I do not see any coercive necessity that many should be without the indispensable conveniencies of life; but am sometimes inclined to imagine, that, casual calamities excepted, there might, by universal prudence, be procured an universal exemption from want; and that he who should happen to have least, might notwithstanding have enough.

But without entering too far into speculations, which I do not remember that any political calculator has attempted, and in which the most perspicacious reason may be easily bewildered, it is evident that they to whom Providence has allotted no other care but of their fortune and their own virtue, which make far the greater part of mankind, have sufficient incitements to perfect frugality; since whatever might be its general effect upon provinces or nations, by which it is never likely to be tried, we know with certainty that there is scarcely an individual entering the world, who, by prudent parsimony, may not reasonably promise himself a cheerful competence in the decline of life.

The prospect of penury in age is so gloomy and terrifying, that every man who looks before him must resolve to avoid it; and it must be avoided generally by the abstinence of sparing. For though in every age there are some who, by bold adventures, or by favourable accidents, rise suddenly to riches, yet it is dangerous to indulge hopes of such rare events; and the bulk of mankind must owe their affluence to small and gradual profits, by which their expence must be resolutely reduced.

You must not therefore think me sinking below the dignity of a practical philosopher, when I recommend the consideration of your readers, from the statesman to the apprentice, a position replete with mercantile wisdom. *A penny saved is two-pence got*; which may, I think, be accommodated to all conditions, by observing not only that they who pursue any lucrative employment will find time when they forbear expence, and that the time must be employed to the encrease of profit; but that they who are above such minute considerations will find, by ex-

History over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly.

It may, perhaps, be enquired by those who are willing rather to cavil than to learn, what is the just measure of frugality? and when expence, not absolutely necessary, degenerates into profusion? To such questions no general answer can be returned; since the liberty of spending, or necessity of parsimony, may be varied without end by different circumstances. It may, however, be laid down as a rule never to be broken, that *a man's voluntary expence should not exceed his revenue*. A maxim so obvious and incontrovertible, that the civil law ranks the prodigal with the madman, and debars them equally from the conduct of their own affairs. Another precept arising from the former, and indeed included in it, is yet necessary to be distinctly impressed upon the mind, the fanciful, and the brave—*Let no man anticipate uncertain profits*. Let no man presume to spend upon hopes, to trust his own abilities for means of deliverance from penury, to give a loose to his present desires, and leave the reckoning to fortune or to virtue.

To these cautions, which I suppose are, at least among the graver part of mankind, undisputed, I will add another—*Let no man squander against his inclination*. With this precept it may be, perhaps, imagined easy to comply; yet if those whom profusion has buried in prisons, or driven into banishment, were examined, it would be found that very few were ruined by their own choice, or purchased pleasure with the loss of their estates; but that they suffered themselves to be borne away by the violence of those with whom they conversed, and yielded reluctantly to a thousand prodigalities, either from a trivial emulation of wealth and spirit, or a mean fear of contempt and ridicule; an emulation for the prize of folly, or the dread of the laugh of fools.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

SOPHRON.

No. LVIII.

No. LVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1750.

—————Improbæ.
 Crescunt divitiæ, tamen
 Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei.

HOR.

But, while in heaps his wicked wealth ascends,
 He is not of his with possess'd;
 There's something wanting still to make him blest'd.

FRANCIS.

AS the love of Money has been, in all ages, one of the passions that has given great disturbance to the tranquillity of the world, there is no topic more copiously treated by the ancient moralists than the folly of devoting the heart to the accumulation of riches. They who are acquainted with these authors need not be told how riches incite pity, contempt, or reproach, whenever they are mentioned; with what numbers of examples the danger of large possessions is illustrated; and how all the powers of reason and eloquence have been exhausted in endeavours to eradicate a desire, which seems to have entrenched itself too strongly in the mind to be driven out, and which, perhaps, had not lost its power, even over those who declaimed against it, but would have broken out in the poet or the sage, if it had been excited by opportunity, and invigorated by the approximation of its proper object.

Their arguments have been, indeed, so unsuccessful, that I know not whether it can be shewn, that by all the wit and reason which this favourite cause has called forth, a single convert was ever made; that even one man has refused to be rich, when to be rich was in his power, from the conviction of the greater happiness of a narrow fortune; or disburthened himself of wealth, when he had tried its inquietudes merely to enjoy the peace, leisure, and security of a mean and unenvied state.

It is true, indeed, that many have neglected opportunities of raising themselves to honours and to wealth,
 and

and rejected the kindest offers of fortune : but, however their moderation may be boasted by themselves, or admired by such as only view them at a distance, it will be, perhaps, seldom found that they value riches less, but that they dread labour or danger more than others ; they are unable to rouse themselves to action, to strain in the race of competition, or to stand the shock of contest ; but though they, therefore, decline the toil of climbing, they nevertheless wish themselves aloft, and would willingly enjoy what they dare not seize.

Others have retired from high stations, and voluntarily condemned themselves to privacy and obscurity. But even these will not afford many occasions of triumph to the philosopher ; for they have commonly either quitted that only which they thought themselves unable to hold, and prevented disgrace by resignation ; or they have been induced to try new measures by general inconstancy, which always dreams of happiness in novelty, or by a gloomy disposition, which is disgusted in the same degree with every state, and wishes every scene of life to change as soon as it is beheld. Such men found high and low stations equally unable to satisfy the wishes of a distempered mind, and were unable to shelter themselves in the closest retreat from disappointment, solicitude, and misery.

Yet though these admonitions have been thus neglected by those who either enjoyed riches, or were able to procure them, it is not rashly to be determined that they are altogether without use ; for since far the greatest part of mankind must be confined to conditions comparatively mean, and placed in situations from which they naturally look up with envy to the eminences before them, those writers cannot be thought ill employed that have administered remedies to discontent almost universal, by showing, that what we cannot reach may very well be forborn, that the inequality of distribution, at which we murmur, is for the most part less than it seems, and that the greatness, which we admire at a distance, has much fewer advantages, and much less splendor, when we are suffered to approach it.

It is the business of moralists to detect the fraud of fortune, and to show that she imposes upon the careless eye, by a quick succession of shadows, which will sink to nothing in the gripe; that she disguises life in extrinsic ornaments, which serve only for show, and are laid aside in the hours of solitude and of pleasure; and that when greatness aspires either to felicity or to wisdom, she shakes off those distinctions which dazzle the gazer, and awe the supplicant.

It may be remarked, that they whose condition is not afforded them the light of moral or religious instruction, and who collect all their ideas by their own eyes, and digest them by their own understandings, seem to consider those who are placed in ranks of remote inferiority, as almost another and higher species of being. As themselves have known little other misery than the consequences of want, they are with difficulty persuaded that where there is wealth there can be sorrow, or that those who glitter in dignity, and glide along in affluence, can be acquainted with pains and cares like those which lie heavy upon the rest of mankind.

This prejudice is, indeed, confined to the lowest narrowness and the darkest ignorance; but it is so common only because others have been shown it's folly and falsehood, because it has been opposed in it's progress by history and philosophy, and hindered from spreading by powerful preservatives.

The doctrine of the contempt of wealth, though it has not been able to extinguish avarice or ambition, or to suppress that reluctance with which a man passes his days in a state of inferiority, must, at least, have made the low conditions less grating and wearisome, and has consequently contributed to the general security of life, by hindering that fraud and violence, rapine and circumspection, which must have been produced by an unbounded eagerness of wealth, arising from an unshaken conviction, that to be rich is to be happy.

Whoever finds himself incited, by some violent impulse of passion, to pursue riches as the chief end of being, must surely be so much alarmed by the successful admonition

monitions of those whose experience and sagacity have recommended them as the guides of mankind, as to stop and consider whether he is about to engage in an undertaking that will reward his toil, and to examine, before he rushes to wealth through right and wrong, what it will confer when he has acquired it; and this examination will seldom fail to repress his ardour, and retard his violence.

Wealth is nothing in itself; it is not useful but when it departs from us; its value is found only in that which it can purchase, which, if we suppose it put to its best use by those that possess it, seems not much to deserve the desire or envy of a wise man. It is certain that, with regard to corporal enjoyment, money can neither open new avenues to pleasure nor block up the passages of anguish. Disease and infirmity still continue to torture and enfeeble, perhaps exasperated by luxury, or promoted by softness. With respect to the mind, it has scarcely been observed, that wealth contributes much to quicken the discernment, enlarge the capacity, or elevate the imagination; but may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence asleep, confirm error, and harden stupidity.

Wealth cannot confer greatness, for nothing can make that great which the decree of nature has ordained to be little. The Bramble may be placed in a hot-bed, but can never become an oak. Even royalty itself is not able to give that dignity which it happens not to find, but oppresses feeble minds, though it may elevate the strong. The world has been governed in the name of kings, whose existence has scarcely been perceived by any real effects beyond their own palaces.

When therefore the desire of wealth is taking hold of the heart, let us look round and see how it operates upon those whose industry or fortune has obtained it. When we find them oppressed with their own abundance, luxurious without pleasure, idle without ease, impatient and querulous in themselves, and despised or hated by the rest of mankind, we shall soon be convinced that if the real wants of our condition are satisfied, there remains little to be sought with solicitude, or desired with eagerness.

No. LIX. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1750.

Est aliquid fatale malum per verba levare,
 Hoc querulam halcyonenque Prognen facit :
 Hoc erat in solo quare Pæantias antro
 Vox fatigaret Lemnia saxa sua.
 Strangulat inclusus dolor atque exæstuat intus,
 Cogitur et vires multiplicare suas.

OVID.

Complaining oft, gives respite to our grief ;
 From hence the wretched Progne sought relief ;
 Hence the Pæantian chief his fate deplores,
 And vents his sorrow to the Lemnian shores :
 In vain by secrecy we would assuage
 Our cares ; conceal'd, they gather tenfold rage.

F. LEWIS.

IT is common to distinguish men by the names of animals which they are supposed to resemble. Thus a hero is frequently termed a Lion, and a statesman a Fox; an extortioner gains the appellation of Vulture, and a fool the title of Monkey. There is also among the various anomalies of character, which a survey of the world exhibits, a species of beings in human form, which may be properly marked out as the screech-owls of mankind.

These screech-owls seem to be settled in an opinion that the great business of life is to complain, and that they were born for no other purpose than to disturb the happiness of others, to lessen the little comforts, and shorten the short pleasures of our condition, by painful remembrances of the past, or melancholy prognosticks of the future; their only care is to crush the rising hope, to damp the kindling transport, and allay the golden hours of gaiety with the hateful dross of grief and suspicion.

To those whose weakness of spirits, or timidity of temper, subjects them to impressions from others, and who are apt to suffer by fascination, and catch the con-

tagion

region of misery, it is extremely unhappy to live within the compass of a screech-owl's voice; for it will often fill their ears in the hour of dejection, terrify them with apprehensions, which their own thoughts would never have produced, and sadden, by intruded sorrows, the day which might have been passed in amusements or in business; it will burthen the heart with unnecessary discontents, and weaken for a time that love of life which is necessary to the vigorous prosecution of any undertaking.

Though I have, like the rest of mankind, many failings and weaknesses, I have not yet, by either friends or enemies, been charged with superstition; I never count the company which I enter, and I look at the new moon indifferently over either shoulder. I have, like most other philosophers, often heard the cuckoo without money in my pocket, and have been sometimes reproached as fool-hardy for not turning down my eyes when a raven flew over my head. I never go home abruptly because a snake crosses my way, nor have any particular dread of a climacterical year: yet I confess that, with all my scorn of old women, and their tales, I consider it as an unhappy day when I happen to be greeted, in the morning, by Suspirius the screech-owl.

I have now known Suspirius fifty-eight years and four months, and have never yet passed an hour with him in which he has not made some attack upon my quiet. When we were first acquainted, his great topick was the misery of youth without riches, and whenever we walked out together he solaced me with a long enumeration of pleasures, which, as they were beyond the reach of my fortune, were without the verge of my desires, and which I should never have considered as the objects of a wish, had not his unseasonable representations placed them in my sight.

Another of his topicks is the neglect or merit, with which he never fails to amuse every man whom he sees not eminently fortunate. If he meets with a young officer, he always informs him of gentlemen whose personal courage is unquestioned, and whose military skill qualifies them to command armies, that have, notwith-

standing all their merit, grown old with subaltern commissions. For a genius in the church, he is always provided with a curacy for life. The lawyer he informs of many men of great part and deep study, who have never had an opportunity to speak in the courts: and meeting Serenus the physician—‘Ah, doctor,’ says he, ‘what, a-foot still, when so many blockheads are rattling in their chariots? I told you, seven years ago, that you would never meet with encouragement; and I hope you will now take more notice, when I tell you, that your Greek, and your diligence, and your honesty, will never enable you to live like yonder apothecary, who prescribes to his own shop, and laughs at the physician.’

Sulpirius has, in his time, intercepted fifteen authors in their way to the stage; persuaded nine and thirty merchants to retire from a prosperous trade for fear of bankruptcy, broke off an hundred and thirteen matches by prognostications of unhappiness, and enabled the smallpox to kill nineteen ladies, by perpetual alarms of the loss of beauty.

Whenever my evil stars bring us together, he never fails to represent to me the folly of my pursuits, and informs me that we are much older than when we began our acquaintance, that the infirmities of decrepitude are coming fast upon me, that whatever I now get I shall enjoy but a little time, that fame is to a man tottering on the edge of the grave of very little importance, and that the time is at hand when I ought to look for no other pleasures than a good dinner and an easy-chair.

Thus he goes on in his unharmonious strain, displaying present miseries, and foreboding more, *ἡ δὲ δαμάτῃς*, every syllable is loaded with misfortune, and death is always brought nearer to the view. Yet, what always raises my resentment and indignation. I do not perceive that his mournful meditations have much effect upon himself. He talks, and has long talked of calamities, without discovering, otherwise than by the tone of his voice, that he feels any of the evils which he bewails or threatens, but has the same habit of utter-

ing lamentations, as others of telling stories, and falls into expressions of condolence for past, or apprehensions of future mischiefs, as all men studious of their ease have recourse to those subjects upon which they can most fluently or copiously discourse.

It is reported of the Sybarites, that they destroyed all their cocks, that they might dream out their morning dreams without disturbance. Though I would not so far promote effeminacy as to propose the Sybarites for an example, yet since there is no man so corruptly foolish, but something useful may be learned from him, I could wish that, in imitation of a people not often to be copied, some regulations might be made to exclude screech-owls from all company, as the enemies of mankind, and confine them to some proper receptacle, where they may mingle sighs at leisure, and thicken the gloom of one another.

'Thou prophet of evil,' says Homer's Agamemnon, 'thou never foretellest me good, but the joy of thy heart is to predict misfortunes.' Whoever is of the same temper might there find the means of indulging his thoughts, and improving his vein of denunciation, and the flock of screech-owls might hoot together without injury to the rest of the world.

Yet, though I have so little kindness for this dark generation, I am very far from intending to debar the soft and tender mind from the privilege of complaining, when the sigh rises from the desire not of giving pain, but of gaining ease. To hear complaints with patience, even when complaints are vain, is one of the duties of friendship; and though it must be allowed that he suffers most like a hero that hides his grief in silence—

Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem.

His outward smiles conceal'd his inward smart.

DRYDEN.

yet it cannot be denied, that he who complains acts like a man, like a social being, who looks for help from his fellow-

fellow-creatures. Pity is to many of the unhappy a source of comfort in hopeless distresses, as it contributes to recommend them to themselves, by proving that they have not lost the regard of others; and Heaven seems to indicate the duty even of barren compassion, by inclining us to weep for evils which we cannot remedy.

No. LX. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1750.

*Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et crantore dicit.* Hor

Whose works the beautiful and base contain,
Of vice and virtue more instructive rules,
Than all the sober sages of the schools.

FRANCIS

ALL joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination that realises the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate; so that we feel, while the deception lasts, whatever motions would be excited by the same good or evil happening to ourselves.

Our passions are therefore more strongly moved, in proportion as we can more readily adopt the pains or pleasure proposed to our minds, by recognising them as once our own, or considering them as naturally incident to our state of life. It is not easy for the most artful writer to give us an interest in happiness or misery, which we think ourselves never likely to feel, and with which we have never yet been made acquainted. Histories of the downfall of kingdoms, and revolutions of empires, are read with great tranquillity; the imperial tragedy pleases common auditors only by its pomp of ornament and grandeur of ideas; and the man whose faculties have been engrossed by business, and whose heart never fluttered but at the rise or fall of stocks, wonders

how

how the attention can be seized, or the affection agitated, by a tale of love.

Those paralld circumstance and kindred images, to which we readily conform our minds, are, above all other writings, to be found in narratives of the lives of particular persons; and therefore no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than Biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

The general and rapid narratives of history, which involve a thousand fortunes in the business of a day, and complicate innumerable incidents in one great transaction, afford few lessons applicable to private life, which derives it's comforts and it's wretchedness from the right or wrong management of things, which nothing but their frequency makes considerable, '*Parva si non sunt quotidia*,' says Pliny, and which can have no place in those relations which never descend below the consultation of senators, the motions of armies, and the schemes of conspirators.

I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful. For not only every man has, in the mighty mass of the world, great numbers in the same condition with himself, to whom his mistakes and miscarriages, escapes and expedients, would be of immediate and apparent use; but there is such an uniformity in the state of man, considered apart from adventitious and separable decorations and disguises, that there is scarce any possibility of good or ill but is common to human kind. A great part of the time of those who are placed at the greatest distance by fortune, or by temper, must unavoidably pass in the same manner; and though, when the claims of nature are satisfied, caprice, and vanity, and accident, begin to produce discriminations and peculiarities, yet the eye is not very heedful or quick, which cannot discover the same causes still terminating their influence in the same effects, though sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, or perplexed by multiplied combinations. We are all prompted

prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure.

It is frequently objected to relations of particular lives, that they are not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes. The scholar who passed his life among his books, the merchant who conducted only his own affairs, the priest, whose sphere of action was not extended beyond that of his duty, are considered as no proper objects of publick regard, however they might have excelled in their several stations, whatever might have been their learning, integrity, and piety. But this notion arises from false measures of excellence and dignity, and must be eradicated by considering, that in the esteem of uncorrupted reason, what is of most use is of most value.

It is, indeed, not improper to take honest advantages of prejudice, and to gain attention by a celebrated name; but the business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestick privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue. The account of Thuanus is, with great propriety, said by it's author to have been written, that it might lay open to posterity the private and familiar character of that man, *cujus ingenium et candorem ex ipsius scriptis sunt olim semper miraturi*—whose candour and genius will to the end of time be by his writings preserved in admiration.

There are many invisible circumstances which, whether we read as enquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science, or increase our virtue, are more important than publick occurrences. Thus Sallust, the great master of nature, has not forgot, in his account of Catiline, to remark that *his walk was now quick, and again slow*, as an indication of a mind revolving something with violent commotion. Thus the story of Melancthon affords a striking lecture on the value of time, by informing us, that when he

made

made an appointment, he expected not only the hour, but the minute to be fixed, that the day might not run out in the idleness of suspense; and all the plans and enterprizes of De Wit are now of less importance to the world than the part of his personal character which represents him as *careful of his health, and negligent of his life.*

But biography has often been allotted to writers who seem very little acquainted with the nature of their task, or very negligent about the performance. They rarely afford any other account than might be collected from publick papers, but imagine themselves writing a life when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferments; and so little regard the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.

If now and then they condescend to inform the world of particular facts, they are not always so happy as to select the most important. I know not well what advantage posterity can receive from the only circumstance by which Tickell has distinguished Addison from the rest of mankind—the *irregularity of his pulse*: nor can I think myself overpaid for the time spent in reading the life of Malherb, by being enabled to relate, after the learned biographer, that Malherb had two predominant opinions; one, that the looseness of a single woman might destroy all her boast of ancient descent; the other, that the French beggars made use, very improperly and barbarously, of the phrase *noble Gentleman*, because either word included the sense of both.

There are, indeed, some natural reasons why these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give much instruction or delight, and why most accounts of particular persons are barren and useless. If a life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expect little intelligence, for the incidents which give excellence

to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few can pourtray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succession of copies will lose all resemblance of the original.

If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publick curiosity, there is danger lest his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not to invent. There are many who think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they can no longer suffice by their detection; we therefore see whole ranks of characters adorned with uniform panegyrick, and not to be known from one another, but by extrinsic and casual circumstances. 'Let me remember,' says Hale, 'when I find myself inclined to pity a criminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country.' If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

No. LXI. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1750.

Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret
Quem nisi mendosum et mendacem?

HORACE

False praise can charm, unreal shame controul—
Whom but a vicious or a sickly soul?

FRANCIS

To the Rambler.

Sir,

IT is extremely vexatious to a man of eager and thirsty curiosity to be placed at a great distance from the fountain of intelligence, and not only never receive the current of report till it has satiated the

greatest

greatest part of the nation; but at last to find it muddled in it's course, and corrupted with taints or mixtures from every channel through which it flowed.

One of the chief pleasures of my life is to hear what passes in the world, to know what are the schemes of the politick, the aims of the busy, and the hopes of the ambitious; what changes of publick measures are approaching; who is likely to be crushed in the collision of parties; who is climbing to the top of power, and who is tottering on the precipice of disgrace. But, as it is very common for us to desire most what we are the least qualified to obtain, I have suffered this appetite of news to outgrow all the gratifications which my present situation can afford it; for being placed in a remote country, I am condemned always to confound the future with the past, to form prognostications of events, no longer doubtful, and to consider the expediency of schemes already executed or defeated. I am perplexed with a perpetual deception in my prospects, like a man pointing his telescope at a remote star, which before the light reaches his eye has forsaken the place from which it was emitted.

The mortification of being thus always behind the active world in my reflections and discoveries, is exceedingly aggravated by the petulance of those whose health, or business, or pleasure, brings them hither from London. For, without considering the insuperable disadvantages of my condition, and the unavoidable ignorance which absence must produce, they often treat me with the utmost superciliousness of contempt, for not knowing what no human sagacity can discover; and sometimes seem to consider me as a wretch scarce worthy of human converse, when I happen to talk of the fortune of a bankrupt, or propose the healths of the dead, when I warn them of mischiefs already incurred, or wish for measures that have been lately taken. They seem to attribute to the superiority of their intellects what they only owe to the accident of their condition, and think themselves indisputably intitled to airs of insolence and authority, when they find another igno-

rant of facts; which, because they echoed in the streets of London, they suppose equally public in all other places, and known where they could neither be related, nor conjectured.

To this haughtiness they are indeed too much enraged by the respect which they receive among us, no other reason than that they come from London. no sooner is the arrival of one of these disseminators of knowledge known in the country, than we crowd about him from every quarter, and by innumerable enquiries flatter him into an opinion of his own importance. He sees himself surrounded by multitudes, who propose doubts, and refer their controversies to him, as if he were being descended from some nobler region; and he grows on a sudden oraculous and infallible, solves all difficulties, and sets all objections at defiance.

There is, in my opinion, great reason for suspecting that they sometimes take advantage of this reverend modesty, and impose upon rustic understandings with a false show of universal intelligence; for I do not think that they are willing to own themselves ignorant of anything, or that they dismiss any enquirer with a positive and decisive answer. The court, the city, the park, the exchange, are to those men of unbounded observation equally familiar, and they are alike ready to tell thee at which stocks will rise, or the ministry be changed.

A short residence at London entitles a man to knowledge, to wit, to politeness, and to a despotick and censorious power of prescribing to the rude multitude whom he condescends to honour with a biennial visit; yet, I know not well upon what motives, I have never found myself inclined to cavil at this prescription, and doubt whether it be not, on some occasions, proper to withhold our veneration, till we are more authentically convinced of the merits of the claimant.

It is well remembered here, that, about seven years ago, one Frolick, a tall boy, with lank hair, remarkable for stealing eggs, and sucking them, was taken from a school in this parish, and sent up to London to study law. As he had given amongst us no proofs of a

the first, designed by nature for extraordinary performances; all of which was, from the time of his departure, totally forgotten: nor was there any talk of his vices or virtues, his good or his ill-fortune, till last summer a report burst upon us, that Mr. Frolick was come down in the first chaise which this village had seen, having travelled with such rapidity, that one of his postillions had broke his leg, and another narrowly escaped suffocation in a quicksand. But that Mr. Frolick seemed totally unconcerned, for such things were never heeded at London.

Mr. Frolick next day appeared among the gentlemen at their weekly meeting on the bowling-green; and now were seen the effects of a London education. His dress, his language, his ideas, were all new; and he did not much endeavour to conceal his contempt of every thing that differed from the opinions, or practice of the fashionable world. He shewed us the deformity of our hats and sleeves, informed us where hats of the proper shape were to be sold, and recommended to us the reformation of a thousand absurdities in our cloaths, our cookery, and our conversation. When any of his phrases were unintelligible, he could not suppress the joy of his confessed superiority, but frequently delayed the explanation, that he might enjoy his triumph over our barbarity.

When he is pleased to entertain us with a story, he takes care to crowd into it the names of streets, squares, and buildings, with which he knows we are unacquainted. The favourite topicks of his discourse are the pranks of drunkards, and the tricks put upon country gentlemen by porters and link-boys. When he is with ladies, he tells them of the innumerable pleasures to which he can introduce them; but never fails to hint, how much they will be deficient, at their first arrival, in the knowledge of the town. What it is to *know the town*, he has not indeed hitherto informed us; though there is no phrase so frequent in his mouth, nor any science which he appears to think of so great a value, or so difficult attainment.

But my curiosity has been most engaged by the recital of his own adventures and achievements. I have

heard of the union of various characters in single persons; but never met with such a constellation of great qualities as this man's narrative affords. Whatever has distinguished the hero; whatever has elevated the warrior; whatever has endeared the lover; are all concentrated in Mr. Frolick, whose life has, for seven years, been a regular interchange of intrigues, dangers, and waggeries, and who has distinguished himself in every character that can be feared, envied, or admired.

I question whether all the officers of the royal navy can bring together, from all their journals, a collection of so many wonderful escapes as this man has known upon the Thames, on which he has been a thousand and a thousand times on the point of perishing, sometimes by the terrors of foolish women in the same boat, sometimes by his own acknowledged imprudence in passing the river in the dark, and sometimes by shooting the bridge, under which he has rencountered mountainous waves, and dreadful cataracts.

Nor less has been his temerity by land, nor fewer his hazards. He has reeled with giddiness on the top of the Monument: he has crossed the street amidst the rush of coaches; he has been surrounded by robbers without number; he has headed parties at the play-house; he has scaled the windows of every toast of whatever condition; he has been hunted for whole winters by his rivals; he has slept upon bulks, he has cut chains, he has bilked coachmen; he has rescued his friends from the bailiffs, has knocked down the constable, has belied the justice, and performed many other exploits, which have filled the town with wonder and with merriment.

But yet greater is the fame of his understanding than his bravery; for he informs us, that he is, at London, the established arbitrator of all points of honour, and the decisive judge of all performances of genius; that no musical performer is in reputation till the opinion of Frolick has ratified his pretensions; that the theatres suspend their sentence till he begins to clap or hiss, in which all are proud to concur: that no publick entertainment has failed or succeeded, but because he opposed

favoured it; that all controversies at the gaming-table are referred to his determination; that he adjusts the ceremonial at every assembly, and prescribes every fashion of pleasure or of dress.

With every man whose name occurs in the papers of the day, he is intimately acquainted; and there are very few posts, either in the state or army, of which he has not more or less influenced the disposal. He has been very frequently consulted both upon war and peace; but the time is not yet come when the nation shall know how much it is indebted to the genius of Frolick.

Yet, notwithstanding all these declarations, I cannot hitherto persuade myself to see that Mr. Frolick has more wit, or knowledge, or courage than the rest of mankind, or that any uncommon enlargement of his faculties has happened in the time of his absence. For when he talks on subjects known to the rest of the company, he has no advantage over us, but by catches of interruption, briskness of interrogation, and pertness of contempt; and therefore if he has stunned the world with his name, and gained a place in the first ranks of humanity, I cannot but conclude, that either a little understanding confers eminence at London, or that Mr. Frolick thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetick needle loses its animation in the polar climes.

I would not, however, like many hasty philosophers, search after the cause till I am certain of the effect; and therefore I desire to be informed, whether you have yet heard the great name of Mr. Frolick. If he is celebrated by other tongues than his own, I shall willingly propagate his praise; but if he has swelled among us with empty boasts, and honours conferred only by himself, I shall treat him with rustick sincerity, and drive him as an impostor from this part of the kingdom, to some region of more credulity.

I am, &c.

RURICOLA.
No. LXII.

No. LXII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1750.

Nunc ego triptolemi cuperem conscendere currus,

Misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum:

Nunc ego Medæ vellem frænare dracones,

Quos habuit fugiens arva, Corinthæ, tuæ;

Nunc ego jactandas optarem fumere pennas,

Sive tuas, Perseu; Dædale, sive tuas.

Omn

Now would I mount his car, whose bounteous hand

First sow'd with teeming seed the furrow'd land:

Now to Medæa's dragons fix my reins,

That swiftly bore her from Corinthian plains;

Now on Dædalian waxen pinions stray,

Or those which wastèd Perseus on his way. F. LEWIS

To the Rambler.

Sir,

I Am a young woman of a very large fortune, which if my parents would have been persuaded to comply with the rules and customs of the polite part of mankind, might long since have raised me to the highest honours of the female world; but so strangely have they hitherto contrived to waste my life, that I am now at the borders of twenty, without having ever danced but at our monthly assembly, or been toasted but among a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or seen any company in which it was worth a wish to be distinguished.

My father having impaired his patrimony in soliciting a place at court, at last grew wise enough to cease his pursuit; and, to repair the consequences of expensive attendance and negligence of his affairs, married a lady much older than himself, who had lived in the fashionable world till she was considered as an encumbrance upon parties of pleasure, and as I can collect from incidental informations, retired from gay assemblies just time enough to escape the mortification of universal neglect.

She was, however, still rich, and not yet wrinkled. My father was too distressfully embarrassed to think much on any thing but the means of extrication; and though it is not likely that he wanted the delicacy which polite conversation will always produce in understandings not remarkably defective, yet he was contented with a match, by which he might be set free from inconveniencies, that would have destroyed all the pleasures of imagination, and taken from softness and beauty the power of delighting.

As they were both somewhat disgusted with their treatment in the world, and married, though without any dislike of each other, yet principally for the sake of setting themselves free from dependence on caprice or fashion, they soon retired into the country, and devoted their lives to rural business and diversions.

They had not much reason to regret the change of their situation; for their vanity, which had so long been tormented by neglect and disappointment, was here gratified with every honour that could be paid them. Their long familiarity with publick life made them the oracles of all those who aspired to intelligence, or politeness. My father dictated politicks, my mother prescribed the mode; and it was sufficient to entitle any family to some consideration, that they were known to visit at Mrs. Courtly's.

In this state they were, to speak in the style of novelists, made happy by the birth of your correspondent. My parents had no other child; I was therefore not brow-beaten by a saucy brother, or lost in a multitude of coheiresses, whose fortunes being equal, would probably have conferred equal merit, and procured equal regard; and as my mother was now old, my understanding and my person had fair play, my enquiries were not checked, my advances towards importance were not repressed, and I was soon suffered to tell my own opinions, and early accustomed to hear my own praises.

By these accidental advantages I was much exalted above the young ladies with whom I conversed, and was treated by them with great deference. I saw
none

none who did not seem to confess my superiority, and to be held in awe by the splendour of my appearance; for the fondness of my father made himself pleased to see me dressed, and my mother had no vanity nor expences to hinder her from concurring with his inclinations.

Thus, Mr. Rambler, I lived without much desire after any thing beyond the circle of our visits; and here I should have quietly continued to portion out my time among my books, and my needle, and my company, had not my curiosity been every moment excited by the conversation of my parents, who, whenever they sit down to familiar prattle, and endeavour the entertainment of each other, immediately transport themselves to London, and relate some adventure in a hackney-coach, some frolick at a masquerade, some conversation in the Park, or some quarrel at an assembly; display the magnificence of a birth-night, relate the conquests of maids of honour, or give a history of diversions, shows, and entertainments, which I had never known but from their accounts.

I am so well versed in the history of the gay world, that I can relate, with great punctuality, the lives of all the last race of wits and beauties; can enumerate, with exact chronology, the whole succession of celebrated singers, musicians, tragedians, comedians, and harlequins; can tell to the last twenty years all the changes of fashion; and am, indeed, a complete antiquary with respect to head-dresses, dances, and operas.

You will easily imagine, Mr. Rambler, that I could not hear these narratives, for sixteen years together, without suffering some impression, and wishing myself nearer to those places where every hour brings some new pleasure, and life is diversified with an unexhausted succession of felicity.

I indeed often asked my mother why she left a place which she recollected with so much delight, and why she did not visit London once a year, like some other ladies, and initiate me in the world by showing me its amusements, its grandeur, and its variety. But she always

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told me that the days which she had seen were such as will never come again; that all diversion is now degenerated, that the conversation of the present age is insipid, that their fashions are unbecoming, their customs absurd, and their morals corrupt; that there is no ray left of the genius which enlightened the times that she remembers; that no one who had seen, or heard, the ancient performers, would be able to bear the bunglers of this despicable age; and that there is now neither politeness nor pleasure, nor virtue, in the world. She therefore assures me that she consults my happiness by keeping me at home, for I should now find nothing but vexation and disgust, and she should be ashamed to see me pleased with such fopperies and trifles, as take up the thoughts of the present set of young people.

With this answer I was kept quiet for several years, and thought it no great inconvenience to be confined to the country, till last summer a young gentleman and his sister came down to pass a few months with one of our neighbours. They had generally no great regard for the country ladies, but distinguished me by a particular complaisance; and, as we grew intimate, gave me such a detail of the elegance, the splendour, the mirth, the happiness of the town, that I am resolved to be no longer buried in ignorance and obscurity, but to share with other wits the joy of being admired, and divide with other beauties the empire of the world.

I do not find, Mr. Rambler, upon a deliberate and impartial comparison, that I am exceeded by Belinda in beauty, in wit, in judgment, in knowledge, or in any thing, but a kind of gay, lively familiarity, by which she mingles with strangers as with persons long acquainted, and which enables her to display her powers without any obstruction, hesitation, or confusion. Yet she can relate a thousand civilities paid to her in publick, can produce, from a hundred lovers, letters filled with praises, protestations, extasies, and despair: has been handed by dukes to her chair; has been the occasion of innumerable quarrels; has paid twenty visits in an afternoon; been invited to six balls in an evening, and been forced

forced to retire to lodgings in the country from the importunity of courtship, and the fatigue of pleasure.

I tell you, Mr. Rambler, I will stay here no longer. I have at last prevailed upon my mother to send me to town, and shall set out in three weeks on the grand expedition. I intend to live in publick, and to crowd into the winter every pleasure which money can purchase, and every honour which beauty can obtain.

But this tedious interval how shall I endure? Cannot you alleviate the misery of delay by some pleasing description of the entertainments of the town? I can read, I can talk, I can think of nothing else; and if you will not soothe my impatience, heighten my ideas, and animate my hopes, you may write for those who have more leisure, but are not to expect any longer the honour of being read by those eyes which are now intent only on conquest and destruction.

RHODOCLIA.

No. LXIII. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1750.

— Habebat sæpe ducentos,

Sæpe decem servos; modo reges atque tetrarchas

Omnia magna loquens: modo, sit mihi mensa triples, et

Coneha salis puri, ettoga, quæ defendere frigus,

Quamvis crassa, queat.

HOR.

Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train;

Now walks with ten, in high and haughty strain,

At morn, of kings and governors he prates;

At night— 'a frugal table, O ye fates!

'A little shell, the sacred salt to hold;

'And clothes, tho' coarse, to keep me from the cold.

FRANCIS.

IT has been remarked, perhaps, by every writer who has left behind him observations upon life, that no man is pleased with his present state; which proves equally unsatisfactory, says Horace, whether fallen upon by chance, or chosen with deliberation; we are always

disgusted

disgusted with some circumstance or other of our situation, and imagining the condition of others more abundant in blessings, or less exposed to calamities.

This universal discontent has been generally mentioned with great severity of censure, as unreasonable in itself, since of two, equally envious of each other, both cannot have the larger share of happiness, and as tending to darken life with unnecessary gloom, by withdrawing our minds from the contemplation and enjoyment of that happiness which our state affords us, and fixing our attention upon foreign objects, which we only behold to depress ourselves, and increase our misery by injurious comparisons.

When this opinion of the felicity of others predominates in the heart, so as to excite resolutions of obtaining, at whatever price, the condition to which such transcendent privileges are supposed to be annexed; when it bursts into action, and produces fraud, violence, and injustice, it is to be pursued with all the rigour of legal punishments. But while operating only upon the thoughts, it disturbs none but him who has happened to admit it, and, however it may interrupt content, makes no attack on piety or virtue, I cannot think it so far criminal or ridiculous, but that it may deserve some pity, and admit some excuse.

That all are equally happy, or miserable, I suppose none is sufficiently enthusiastical to maintain; because though we cannot judge of the condition of others, yet every man has found frequent vicissitudes in his own state, and must therefore be convinced that life is susceptible of more or less felicity. What then shall forbid us to endeavour the alteration of that which is capable of being improved, and to grasp at augmentations of good, when we know it possible to be increased, and believe that any particular change of situation will increase it?

If he that finds himself uneasy may reasonably make efforts to rid himself from vexation, all mankind have a sufficient plea for some degree of restlessness, and the fault seems to be little more than too much temerity of conclusion in favour of something not yet experienced,
and

and too much readiness to believe that the misery which our own passions and appetites produce, is brought upon us by accidental causes and external efficient.

It is, indeed, frequently discovered by us, that we complained too hastily of peculiar hardships, and imagined ourselves distinguished by embarrassments, which other classes of men are equally entangled. We often change a lighter for a greater evil, and wish ourselves restored again to the state from which we thought it desirable to be delivered. But this knowledge, though it is easily gained by the trial, is not always attainable any other way; and that error cannot justly be reproached, which reason could not obviate, nor prudence avoid.

To take a view at once distinct and comprehensive of human life, with all its intricacies of combination, and varieties of connexion, is beyond the power of mortal intelligences. Of the state with which practice has acquainted us, we snatch a glimpse, we discern a point, and regulate the rest by passion, and by fancy. In the enquiry every favourite prejudice, every innate desire, is busy to deceive us. We are unhappy, at least less happy than our nature seems to admit; we necessarily desire the melioration of our lot; what we desire, we very reasonably seek, and what we seek we are naturally eager to believe that we have found. Our confidence is often disappointed, but our reason is not convinced; and there is no man who does not hope for something which he has not, though perhaps his wishes lie unactive, because he foresees the difficulty of attainment. As among the numerous students of Hermetick philosophy not one appears to have desisted from the task of transmutation from conviction of its impossibility, but from weariness of toil, or impatience of delay, a broken body or exhausted fortune.

Irresolution and mutability are often the faults of men whose views are wide, and whose imagination is vigorous and excursive, because they cannot confine their thoughts within their own boundaries of action, but are continually ranging over all the scenes of human existence, and

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consequently are often apt to conceive that they fall upon new regions of pleasure, and start new possibilities of happiness. Thus they are busied with a perpetual fluctuation of schemes, and pass their lives in alternate elation and sorrow, for want of that calm and immoveable acquiescence in their condition by which men of slower understandings are fixed for ever to a certain point, or led on in the plain beaten track which their fathers and grandfathers have trod before them.

Of two conditions of life equally inviting to the profane, that will always have the disadvantage which we have already tried; because the evils which we have felt we cannot extenuate; and though we have, perhaps from nature, the power as well of aggravating the calamity which we fear, as of heightening the blessing we expect, yet in those meditations which we indulge by choice, and which are not forced upon the mind by necessity, we have always the art of fixing our regard upon the more pleasant images, and suffer hope to dispose the thoughts by which we look upon futurity.

The good and ill of different modes of life are sometimes so equally opposed, that perhaps no man ever yet made his choice between them upon a full conviction and adequate knowledge; and therefore fluctuation of will is not more wonderful, when they are proposed to the election, than oscillations of a beam charged with equal weights. The mind no sooner imagines itself determined by some prevalent advantage, than some convenience of equal weight is discovered on the other side, and the resolutions which are suggested by the nicest examination are often repented as soon as they are taken.

Eumenes, a young man of great abilities, inherited a large estate from a father long eminent in conspicuous employments. His father, harassed with competitions, and perplexed with multiplicity of business, recommended the quiet of a private station with so much force, that Eumenes for some years resisted every motion of ambitious wishes; but being once provoked by the sight of oppression, which he could not redress, he began to think it the duty of an honest man to enable himself to protect

others and gradually felt a desire of greatness, and by a thousand projects of advantage to his country. His fortune placed him in the senate, his knowledge and eloquence advanced him at court, and he possessed authority and influence which he had resolved to use for the happiness of mankind.

He now became acquainted with greatness, and in a short time convinced, that in proportion as the power of doing well is enlarged, the temptations to do ill are multiplied and enforced. He felt himself every moment in danger of being either seduced or driven from his nearest purposes. Sometimes a friend was to be gratified, and sometimes a rival to be crushed, by means which his conscience could not approve. Sometimes he was forced to comply with the prejudices of the publick, and sometimes with the schemes of the ministry. He was at times wearied with perpetual struggles to unite power and virtue, and went back to retirement as the theatre of innocence, persuaded that he could only hope to benefit mankind by a blameless example of private virtue. When he spent some years in tranquillity and beneficence, finding that corruption increased, and false opinions in government prevailed, he thought himself again summoned to posts of publick trust, from which new evidence of his own weakness again determined him to retire.

Thus men may be made inconstant by virtue and vice, by too much or too little thought; yet inconstant, however dignified by its motives, is always to be avoided, because life allows us but a small time for enquiry and experiment; and he that steadily endeavours at a single kind of excellence, in whatever employment, will more benefit mankind than he that hesitates in choosing his part till he is called to the performance. The traveller that resolves to follow a rough and winding path will sooner reach the end of his journey than he that is always changing his direction, and wastes the hours of day-light in looking for smoother ground, and shorter passages.

No. LXIV. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1750.

Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est.

SALLUST.

To live in friendship is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

WHEN Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one that observed the greatness of the design, why a man so eminent would have an abode more suitable to his dignity? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated, if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends. Such was the opinion of this great master of human life concerning the infrequency of such an union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that, among the multitudes whom vanity, curiosity, civility or veneration, crouded about him, he did not expect that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to it's rise and it's continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply it's place as they can, with interest and dequity.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence by perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent

with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in the benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest; to follow the opinion of every considerate adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or safer way to the sagacity of another: inclined to consider counsel as insult, and enquiry as want of confidence; and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes, and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and shewing their design only in it's execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity; ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend whose kindness is exhorted by it's own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he cannot be a useful counsellor who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed who spreads his arms to human-kind, and makes every man, without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting

there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but the virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often, by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestible evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, derives from one it's tenderness, and it's permanence from the other; and therefore requires not only that it's candidates should gain the judgment, but that they should attract the affections; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of jollity; not only useful in exigencies, but pleasing in familiar life; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual complacency is generally requisite a uniformity of opinions, at least of those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in government, and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. For though great tenderness has, perhaps, been sometimes known to continue between men eminent in contrary factions, yet such friends are to be shewn rather as prodigies than examples; and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of publick opposition, in which will necessarily be involved a thousand incident; extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties will, generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles. When such occasions of dispute happen, to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it; to be silent,

is to lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray, and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess the importance of the question? What then remains but contradiction and debate? and from those what can be expected but acrimony and vehemence, the influence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, at last, a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence? Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but when the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve it's smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable whom we see only in times of seriousness and severity; and therefore, to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another; and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me, by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every favourer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should forbear open hostilities and secret machinations, and when the whole fraternity is attacked, be able to unite against a common foe. Some, however, though few, may perhaps be found, in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguish-

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RAMBLER, VOL. 2. N^o 65.

"Afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong"

from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can preserve the sacred flame of friendship from the gulfs of pride, and the rubbish of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration, but commonly take away that easy freedom, and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence; but by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion, for duty is to be preferred before convenience; and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

No. LXV. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1750.

———Garrit aniles

Ex re fabellas.———

HOR.

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

OBIDAH, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the vallies, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the

the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right-hand, a grove that seemed to wave it's shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence without suffering it's fatigues. He therefore still continued to walk, for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the musick of the birds, whom the heat had assembled in the shades; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers that covered the banks on either sides, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from it's first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains, and murmuring with water-falls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in it's greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation

entation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the sun vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty anxiety that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his spear in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and solitude surrounded him: the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills—

—χιμαῖοι ποταμοὶ κατ' ὃ ρέουσι ῥέοντες
 ἡ μισγαλκία θυμὸν ἀλλεῖλον ὄρεμον ὑδάρι,
 ὅτι τι τηλόσι δὲ πόνι ἐν ἔρεσιν ἔκλυι ποιμην.

Work'd

Work'd into sudden rage by wint'ry show'rs,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled; and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over—'Tell me, said the hermit, by what chance thou hast been brought hither.' 'I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of this wilderness, in which I never saw a man before.' Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

'Son,' said the hermit, 'let the errors and follies, the dangers and escape, of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is but a journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we renounce our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides; we are

then willing to enquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we for a while keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerse ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made: that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errors; and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose; commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence; and, when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life.

No. LXVI. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1717

Pauci dignoscere possunt
 Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remota
 Erroris nebula.

Juv.

How few
 Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue?
 How void of reason are our hopes and fears?

DRYDEN.

THE folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age, till perhaps the fruitless repetition of complaints and censures may be justly numbered among the subjects of censure and complaint.

Some of these instructors of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion, and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branch, and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed their reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man; have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and concluded, among vulgar errors, the dread of pain, and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning, to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system. As a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest, by the addition of another, add fortress to fortress, add city to city, till despair and opportunity turn his

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...ies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a
reign.

The philosophers having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded to make further inroads upon the heart, and attacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms, by which only folly could be conquered; they therefore lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these men have been very useful monitors, and have left many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shewn that most of the conditions of life which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which, when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstruited to murmur at his condition, because in the general infelicity of life he feels his own miseries, without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is nowhere to be found; and, though his disease still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth, extent of power, and eminence of reputation, confer, must be always by their own nature confined to a very small number; and the life of the greater part of mankind must be spent in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not

the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution, soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition which is known among us by the name of Vanity; which yet has been an undertaking not unworthy of the longest bearing and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and devastations, or mark by great events the periods of time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill directed. We fall, by chance, into the class of mankind; and, without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkable for his dim-sightedness, who, by conversing much with country gentlemen, found himself irresistibly determined to follow their van honours. His great ambition was to shoot birds, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing the game; which, before he was near enough to see the end of his approach frightened away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with too much indulgence; because, however fruitless or absurd, it does not have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction is often sufficient to be keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions which are generally thought the curse only of kingdoms, of armies, and of courts; and the rival dancers at an obscure assembly have their partisans and abettors.

ten not less exasperated against each other than those who are promoting the interests of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness; but, perhaps, those whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or error, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expence of wisdom and of virtue; but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct, and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women universally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study their complexions, endeavour to preserve or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour which beauty produces whenever it appears? And with what hope can we endeavour to persuade the ladies, that the time spent at the toilet is lost in vanity, when they have every moment some new conviction; that their interest is more effectually promoted by a ribband well disposed, than by the brightest act of heroic virtue?

In every instance of vanity it will be found, that the blame ought to be shared among more than it generally reaches; all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invidious incitements, are to be considered as perverters of reason, and corrupters of the world: and since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

No. LXVII. TUSEDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1750

Αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκεισι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος,
 Καλῶς βλέπεσιν ὄμμασι, μέλλεσι δέ.

EURIP.

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on hope;
 Delusive hope still points to distant good,
 To good that mocks approach.

THERE is no temper so generally indulged as Hope. Other passions operate by starts on particular occasions, or in certain parts of life; but hope begins with the first power of comparing our actual with our possible state, and attends us through every stage and period, always urging us forward to new acquisitions, and holding out some distant blessing to our view; promising us either relief from pain, or increase of happiness.

Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity, would, without this comfort, be insupportable; nor does it appear that the happiest lot of terrestrial existence can set us above the want of this general blessing; or that life, when the gifts of nature and of fortune are accumulated upon it, would not still be wretched, were it not elevated and delighted by the expectation of some new possession, of some enjoyment yet behind, by which the wish shall be at last satisfied, and the heart filled up to its utmost extent.

Hope is indeed very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompensing the delay by a greater bounty.

I was musing on this strange inclination which every man feels to deceive himself, and considering the advantages and dangers proceeding from this gay prospect of futurity, when, falling asleep, on a sudden I found myself placed in a garden, of which my sight could discern no limits. Every scene about me was gay and gladsome, light with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; the

ground

ground was painted with all the variety of spring, and all the choir of nature was singing in the groves. When I had recovered from the first raptures with which the confusion of pleasure had for a time entranced me, I began to take a particular and deliberate view of this delightful region. I then perceived that I had yet higher gratifications to expect, and that, at a small distance from me, there were brighter flowers, clearer fountains, and more lofty groves; where the birds, which I yet heard but faintly, were exerting all the power of melody. The trees about me were beautiful with verdure, and fragrant with blossoms; but I was tempted to leave them by the sight of ripe fruits, which seemed to hang only to be plucked. I therefore walked hastily forwards, but found, as I proceeded, that the colours of the field faded at my approach, the fruit fell before I reached it, the birds flew still singing before me, and though I pressed onward with great celerity, I was still in sight of pleasures of which I could not yet gain the possession, and which seemed to mock my diligence, and to retire as I advanced.

Though I was confounded with so many alternations of joy and grief, I yet persisted to go forward, in hopes that these fugitive delights would in time be overtaken. At length I saw an innumerable multitude of every age and sex, who seemed all to partake of some general felicity; for every cheek was flushed with confidence, and every eye sparkled with eagerness: yet each appeared to have some particular and secret pleasure; and very few were willing to communicate their intentions, or extend their concern beyond themselves. Most of them seemed, by the rapidity of their motion, too busy to gratify the curiosity of a stranger; and therefore I was content for a while to gaze upon them, without interrupting them with troublesome enquiries. At last I observed one man worn with time, and unable to struggle in the crowd; and therefore supposing him more at leisure, I began to accost him; but he turned from me with anger, and told me he must not be disturbed, for the great hour of projection was now come, when Mercury should lose his wings,

wings, and Slavery should no longer dig the mine for gold.

I left him and attempted another, whose softness of mien and easy movement gave me reason to hope for more agreeable reception; but he told me, with a low bow, that nothing would make him more happy than an opportunity of serving me, which he could not now want; for a place which he had been twenty years soliciting would be soon vacant. From him I had recourse to the next, who was departing in haste to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who by the course of nature could not live long. He that followed was preparing to dive for treasure in a new-invented bell; and another was on the point of discovering the longitude.

Being thus rejected wheresoever I applied myself for information, I began to imagine it best to desist from enquiry, and try what my own observation would discover; but seeing a young man gay and thoughtless, I resolved upon one more experiment, and was informed that I was in the garden of Hope, the daughter of Desire, and that all those whom I saw thus tumultuously bustling round me, were incited by the promises of Hope, and hastening to seize the gifts which she held in her hand.

I turned my sight upward, and saw a goddess in the bloom of youth, sitting on a throne; around her lay all the gifts of fortune, and all the blessings of life were spread abroad to view; she had a perpetual gaiety of aspect, and every one imagined that her smile, which was impartial and general, was directed to himself, and triumphed in his own superiority to others, who had conceived the same confidence from the same mistake.

I then mounted an eminence, from which I had a more extensive view of the whole place, and could without perplexity consider the different conduct of the crowd that filled it. From this station I observed, that the entrance into the garden of Hope was by two gates, one of which was kept by Reason, and the other by Fancy. Reason was surly and scrupulous, and seldom turned the key without many interrogatories, and long hesitations.

but Fancy was a kind and gentle portress; she held her gate wide open, and welcomed all equally to the district under her superintendency; so that the passage was crowded by all those who either feared the examination of Reason, or had been rejected by her.

From the gate of Reason there was a way to the throne of Hope, by a craggy, slippery, and winding path, called the *Sireight of Difficulty*, which those who entered with the permission of the guard endeavoured to climb. But though they surveyed the way very cheerfully before they began to rise, and marked out the several stages of their progress, they commonly found unexpected obstacles, and were obliged frequently to stop on the sudden, where they imagined the way plain and even. A thousand intricacies embarrassed them, a thousand slips threw them back, and a thousand pitfalls impeded their advance. So formidable were the dangers, and so frequent the miscarriages, that many returned from the first attempt, and many fainted in the midst of the way; and only a very small number were led up to the summit of Hope, by the hand of Fortitude. Of these few, the greater part, when they had obtained the gift which Hope had promised them, regretted the labour which it cost, and felt in their success the regret of disappointment; the rest retired with their prize, and were led by Wisdom to the bowers of Content.

Turning then towards the gate of Fancy, I could find no way to the seat of Hope: but though she sat full in view, and held out her gifts with an air of invitation, which filled every heart with rapture, the mountain was on that side inaccessiblely steep, but so channelled and shaded, that none perceived the impossibility of ascending it, but each imagined himself to have discovered a way to which the rest were strangers. Many expedients were indeed tried by this industrious tribe, of whom some were making themselves wings, which others were contriving to actuate by the perpetual motion. But with all their labour, and all their artifices, they never rose above the ground, or quickly fell back; nor ever approached the throne of Hope, but continued still to gaze at a distance, and

and laughed at the slow progress of those whom they found toiling in the *Streight of Difficulty*.

Part of the favourites of Fancy, when they had entered the garden, without making, like the rest, an attempt to climb the mountain, turned immediately to the vale of Idleness, a calm and undisturbed retirement from whence they could always have Hope in prospect and to which they pleased themselves with believing they intended speedily to descend. These were indeed scorned by all the rest; but they seemed very little affected by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddesses.

Among this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth; but turning round, I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of whom I knew to be Age, and the other Want. Sport and revelling were now at an end, and an universal shriek of affliction and distress burst out and awaked me.

No. LXVIII. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1750

Vivendum recte, cum propter plurima, tunc his
Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima servi. Juvenal.

Let us live well: were it alone for this,
The baneful tongues of servants to despise:
Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds
An easy entrance to ignoble minds. HERVEY.

THE younger Pliny has very justly observed, that actions that deserve our attention, the most splendid are not always the greatest. Fame, wonder, and applause, are not excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and separate from virtue and heroism. Eminence of station, greatness of effect, and all the favours of fortune, must concur to place excellence in public view; but fortitude, diligence, and patience

ence, divested of their show, glide unobserved through the crowd of life, and suffer and act, though with the same vigour and constancy, yet without pity and without praise.

This remark may be extended to all parts of life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effect upon common eyes and common ears. A thousand miseries make silent and invisible inroads on mankind, and the heart feels innumerable throbs, which never break into complaint. Perhaps, likewise, our pleasures are for the most part equally secret, and most are borne up by some private satisfaction, some internal consciousness, some latent hope, some peculiar prospect which they never communicate, but reserve for solitary hours and clandestine meditation.

The main of life is, indeed, composed of small incidents and petty occurrences; of wishes for objects not remote, and grief for disappointments of no fatal consequence; of insect vexations which sting us and fly away, impertinences which buz a while about us, and are heard no more; of meteorous pleasures which dance before us and are dissipated; of compliments which glide off the soul like other music, and are forgotten by him that gave, and him that received them.

Such is the general heap out of which every man is to pull his own condition: for, as the chemists tell us, that all bodies are resolvable into the same elements, and that the boundless variety of things arises from the different proportions of very few ingredients; so a few pains and a few pleasures are all the materials of human life, and of these the proportions are partly allotted by Providence, and partly left to the arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is for the most part happy or miserable. For very few are involved in great events, or have their thread of life entwisted with the chain of causes on which armies or nations are suspended; and even those who seem wholly busied in public affairs, and elevated above low cares, or trivial pleasures, pass the chief part of their time in familiar and domestic scenes; from these they come into public life,

to

to these they are every hour recalled by passions not
be suppressed; in these they have the reward of all their
toils, and to these at last they retire.

The great end of prudence is to give cheerfulness to
those hours which splendour cannot gild, and acclamation
cannot exhilarate; those soft intervals of unbusiness
amusement, in which a man shrinks to his natural
dimensions, and throws aside the ornaments or disguises
which he feels in privacy to be useless incumbrances, and
to lose all effect when they become familiar. To be
happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the
end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and
which every desire prompts the prosecution.

It is indeed at home that every man must be known
by those who would make a just estimate either of his
virtue or felicity; for smiles and embroidery are alike in-
cidental; and the mind is often dressed for show in painful
honour and fictitious benevolence.

Every man must have found some whose lives, in
every house but their own, was a continual series of
poetry, and who concealed under fair appearances
qualities, which, whenever they thought themselves
out of the reach of censure, broke out from their
straint, like winds imprisoned in their caverns, and which
every one had reason to love, but they whose love and
man is chiefly solicitous to procure. And there are others
who, without any show of general goodness, and without
out the attractions by which popularity is conciliated,
received among their own families as bestowers of hap-
piness, and revered as instructors, guardians, and
benefactors.

The most authentic witnesses of any man's character
are those who know him in his own family, and feel
without any restraint or rule of conduct, but such
he voluntarily prescribes to himself. If a man carefully
virtue with him into his private apartments, and
no advantage of unlimited power or probable secrecy
we trace him through the round of his time, and
that his character, with those allowances which
frailty must always want, is uniform and regular,

of have all the evidence of his sincerity that one man can have with regard to another: and, indeed, as hypocrisy cannot be its own reward, we may, without hesitation, conclude that his heart is pure.

The highest panegyric, therefore, that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants. For, however vainglory or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice. Vice and virtue are easily distinguished. Oppression, according to Harrington's aphorism, will be felt by those that cannot see it; and perhaps we know fulls out very often, that, in moral questions, the philosophers in the gown and in the livery, differ not so much in their sentiments as in their language, and have an equal power of discerning right, though they cannot point it out to others with equal address.

There are very few faults to be committed in solitude, or without some agents, partners, confederates, or witnesses; and therefore the servant must commonly know the secrets of a master, who has any secrets to entrust; and their failings, merely personal, are so frequently exposed, and that security which pride and folly generally produce, is so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of condition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestic can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its impartiality may sometimes be suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship palliates.

The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be carefully considered as one motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable, than his who has put himself in the power of his servant; in the power of him, whom perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that

authority,

authority, thus required, is possessed without insolence or that the master is not forced to confess, by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by foolish confidence: And his crime is equally punished whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is reduced; and he is from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, in perpetual dread of insult or defamation; of a controul at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secure and which, after a long course of submission, promise and anxieties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or a frolic of drunkenness.

To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the prerogative of innocence; an exemption granted only to an invariable virtue. But guilt has always its horrors and sollicitudes; and to make it yet more shameful and detestable, it is doomed often to stand in awe of those whom nothing could give influence or weight but the power of betraying.

No. LXIX. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1750

Flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,
Tyndaris; et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit.
Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas
Omnia destruitis: vitiataque dentibus ævi
Paulatim lenta consumitis omnia morte.

OVID.

The dreadful wrinkles when poor Helen spy'd,
Ah! why this second rape?—with tears she cry'd:
Time, thou devourer, and thou envious age,
Who all destroy with keen corroding rage,
Beneath your jaws, whate'er have pleas'd or please,
Must sink, consum'd by swift or slow degrees.

ELPHINSTON.

AN old Greek epigrammatist, intending to shew the miseries that attend the last stage of man, impressed upon those who are so foolish as to wish for long life, a calamity

calamity

solennity of continuing to grow old from century to century. He thought that no adventitious or foreign pain was requisite, that decrepitude itself was an epitome of what is dreadful, and nothing could be added to the curse of age, but that it should be extended beyond its natural limits.

The most indifferent or negligent spectator can indeed scarcely retire without heaviness of heart, from a view of the last scenes of the tragedy of life, in which he finds one who in the former parts of the drama were distinguished by opposition of conduct, contrariety of designs, and dissimilitude of personal qualities, all involved in the common distress, and all struggling with affliction which they cannot hope to overcome.

The other miseries, which waylay our passage through the world, wisdom may escape, and fortitude conquer: caution and circumspection we may steal along with very little to obstruct or incommode us; by spirit and vigour we may force a way, and reward the vexation of contest by the pleasures of victory:—But a time must come when our policy and bravery shall be equally useless; when we shall all sink into helplessness and sadness, without any power of receiving solace from the pleasures that have formerly delighted us, or any prospect of emerging into a second possession of the blessings that we have lost.

The industry of man has, indeed, not been wanting in endeavours to procure comforts for these hours of dejection and melancholy, and to gild the dreadful gloom with artificial light. The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose hoards are full, imagines himself always fortified against invasions on his authority. If he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he is at last alter his will: and therefore all that have hopes must likewise have fears; and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest.

This is, indeed, too frequently the citadel of the do-
mestick, the last fortress to which age retires, and in which

he makes the stand against the upstart race that seize domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his inscriptions. But here, though there may be safety, there is no pleasure; and what remains is but a proof that was once possessed.

Nothing seems to have been more universally dreaded by the ancients than *orbitv*, or want of children: indeed to a man who has survived all the companions of his youth, all who have participated his pleasures, his cares, have been engaged in the same events, filled their minds with the same conceptions, this peopled world is a dismal solitude. He stands forlorn and silent, neglected or insulted, in the midst of multitudes, animated with hopes which he cannot share, employed in business which he is no longer able to forward or retard; nor can he find any to whom his life and his death are of importance, unless he has secured his domestic gratifications, some tender employments, to which he has endeared himself to some whose interest and gratitude may unite them to him.

So different are the colours of life, as we look forward to the future, or backward to the past; and so different the opinions and sentiments which this contrariety of appearance naturally produces, that the conversation of old and young ends generally with contempt or pity on either side. To a young man entering the world, the fulness of hope and ardour of pursuit, nothing is so pleasing as the cold caution, the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidence, which experience and disappointments certainly infuse; and the old man wonders, in turn, that the world can never grow wiser, that new precepts nor testimonies can cure boys of their credulity and insufficiency; and that not one can be convinced that snares are laid for him, till he finds himself entangled.

Thus one generation is always the scorn and wonder of the other; and the notions of the old and young like liquors of different gravity and texture, which never can unite. The spirits of youth sublimed by health, volatilised by passion, soon leave behind them the phlegm

to seize the sediment of weariness and deliberation, and burst his way in temerity and enterprise. The tenderness, therefore, which nature infuses, and which long habits of reflection confirm, is necessary to reconcile such opposition; and an old man must be a father to bear with patience those follies and absurdities which he will perpetually imagine himself to find in the schemes and expectations, the pleasures and the sorrows, of those who have not yet been hardened by time, and chilled by frustration.

Yet it may be doubted, whether the pleasure of seeing children ripening into strength be not overbalanced by the pain of seeing some fall in the blossom, and others blasted in their growth; some shaken down by storms, some infected with cankers, and some thrivelled in the shade: whether he that extends his care beyond himself does not multiply his anxieties more than his pleasures, and weary himself to no purpose, by superintending what he cannot regulate.

But though age be to every order of human beings sufficiently terrible, it is particularly to be dreaded by fine ladies, who have had no other end or ambition than to fill up the day and the night with dress, diversions, and idleness; and who having made no acquaintance with knowledge or with business, have constantly caught all their ideas from the current prattle of the hour, and been indebted for all their happiness to compliments and treats. With these ladies age begins early, and very often lasts long; it begins when their beauty fades, when their youth loses its sprightliness, and their motion its ease. From that time, all which gave them joy vanishes from about them; they hear the praises bestowed on others which used to swell their bosoms with exultation. They quit the seats of felicity, and endeavour to continue the habit of being delighted: But pleasure is only received when we believe that we give it in return. Neglect and idleness inform them, that their power and their value are past; and what then remains but a tedious and comfortable uniformity of time, without any motion of the heart, or exercise of the reason!

Yet, however age may discourage us by its appearance

from considering it in prospect, we shall all by degrees certainly be old; and therefore we ought to enquire what provision can be made against that time of distress; what happiness can be stored up against the winter of life? and how we may pass our latter years with serenity and cheerfulness?

It has been found by the experience of mankind, that not even the best seasons of life are able to supply sufficient gratifications, without anticipating uncertain felicities; it cannot surely be supposed that old age, with labours, harrassed with anxieties, and tortured with diseases, should have any gladness of its own, or any satisfaction from the contemplation of the present. All the comfort that can now be expected must be recalled from the past, or borrowed from the future; the past is very soon exhausted, all the events or actions which the memory can afford pleasure are quickly recalled; and the future lies beyond the grave, where it can be reached only by virtue and devotion.

Piety is the only proper and adequate relief of declining man. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into imbecility, and feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding upon him, falls into a gulph of bottomless misery, in which every reflection must plunge him deeper, and where he finds only new gradations of anguish, and precipices of horror.

No. LXX. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1751

— Argentea proles,
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære. OVID.

Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold. DRYDEN

HESIOD, in his celebrated distribution of mankind divides them into three orders of intellect. 'The first place,' says he, 'belongs to him that can by his own power

powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him that is willing to hear instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shewn him by another; but he that has neither acuteness nor docility, who can neither find the way by himself, nor will be led by others, is a wretch without use or value.

If we survey the moral world, it will be found that the same division may be made of men with regard to their virtue. There are some whose principles are so firmly fixed, whose conviction is so constantly present to their minds, and who have raised in themselves such ardent wishes for the approbation of God, and the happiness with which he has promised to reward obedience and perseverance, that they rise above all other cares and considerations, and uniformly examine every action and desire, by comparing it with the divine commands. There are others in a kind of equipoise, between good and ill; who are moved on the one part by riches or pleasures, by the gratifications of passion and the delights of sense; and, on the other, by laws of which they own the obligation, and rewards of which they believe the reality, and whom a very small addition of weight turns either way. The third class consists of beings immersed in pleasure, or abandoned to passion, without any desire of higher good, or any effort to extend their thoughts beyond immediate and gross satisfactions.

The second class is so much the most numerous, that it may be considered as comprising the whole body of mankind. Those of the last are not very many, and those of the first are very few; and neither the one nor the other fall much under the consideration of the moralist, whose precepts are intended chiefly for those who are endeavouring to go forward up the steep of virtue; not for those who have already reached the summit, or those who are resolved to stay for ever in their present situation.

To a man not versed in the living world, but accustomed to judge only by speculative reason, it is scarcely credible that any one should be in this state of indifference,

ference, or stand undetermined and unengaged, ready to follow the first call to either side. It seems certain, that either a man must believe that virtue will make him happy, and resolve therefore to be virtuous, or think that he may be happy without virtue, and therefore cast away all care but for his present interest. It seems impossible that conviction should be on one and practice on the other; and that he who has seen the right way, should voluntarily shut his eyes, that he may quit it with more tranquillity. Yet all these absurdities are every hour to be found; the wisest and best men deviate from known and acknowledged duties, by inadvertency or surpise; for and most are good no longer than while temptation is away, than while their passions are without excitement, and their opinions are free from the counteraction of any other motive.

Among the sentiments - which almost every man changes as he advances into years, is the expectation of uniformity of character. He that without acquaintance with the power of desire, the cogency of distress, the complications of affairs, or the force of partial influence has filled his mind with the excellence of virtue, and having never tried his resolution in any encounters with hope or fear, believes it able to stand firm whatever shall oppose it, will be always clamorous against the smallest failure, ready to exact the utmost punctualities of right duty, as without conscience and without merit, unworthy of trust or love, of pity or regard; as an enemy whom all should join to drive out of society, as a pest which all should avoid, or as a weed which all should trample.

It is not but by experience that we are taught the possibility of retaining some virtues and rejecting others, of being good or bad to a particular degree. For it is very easy to the solitary reasoner to prove that the same arguments by which the mind is fortified against crime, are of equal force against all; and the consequence very naturally follows, that he whom they fail to move on any occasion, has either never considered them, or been by some fallacy taught himself to evade their validity.

ready and that, therefore, when a man is known to be guilty of one crime, no farther evidence is needful of his depravity and corruption.

Yet such is the state of all mortal virtue, that it is always uncertain and variable, sometimes extending to the whole compass of duty, and sometimes shrinking into a narrow space, and fortifying only a few avenues of the heart, while all the rest is left open to the incursions of appetite, or given up to the dominion of wickedness. Nothing therefore is more unjust than to judge of a known man by too short an acquaintance, and too slight inspection; for it often happens that in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipated, there is a secret radical worth, which may shoot out by proper cultivation; that the spark of heaven, though dimmed and obstructed, is yet not extinguished, but may by the breath of counsel and exhortation be kindled into flame.

To imagine that every one who is not completely good is irrecoverably abandoned, is to suppose that all are capable of the same degrees of excellence; it is indeed to detract from all that perfection which none ever can attain. And since the purest virtue is consistent with some vice, and the virtue of the greatest number with almost an equal proportion of contrary qualities, let none too hastily conclude that all goodness is lost, though it may for a time be clouded and overwhelmed; for most of mankind are the slaves of external circumstances, and conform to any hand that undertakes to mould them, roll down any torrent of custom in which they happen to be caught, or bend to any importunity that bears hard against them.

It may be particularly observed of women, that they are for the most part good or bad, as they fall among those who practise vice or virtue; and that neither education nor reason gives them much security against the influence of example. Whether it be that they have less courage to stand against opposition, or that their desire of admiration makes them sacrifice their principles to the poor pleasure of worthless praise, it is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground against laughter, flattery, or fashion.

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For this reason, every one should consider himself entrusted not only with his own conduct, but with that of others; and as accountable, not only for the duties which he neglects, or the crimes that he commits, but for that negligence and irregularity which he may encourage or inculcate. Every man, in whatever station, has, or endeavours to have, his followers, admirers, and imitators, and has therefore the influence of his example to watch with care; he ought to avoid not only crimes, but the appearance of crimes; and not only to practise virtue, but to applaud, countenance, and support it. For it is possible that for want of attention we may teach other faults from which ourselves are free, or by a cowardly desertion of a cause which we ourselves approve, may pervert those who fix their eyes upon us, and having no rule of their own to guide their course, are easily misled by the aberrations of that example which they chuse for their directions.

No. LXXI. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1759

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis
Da veniam, properat vivere nemo fatis.

MART.

True, sir, to live I haste; your pardon give,
For tell me who makes haste enough to live?

F. LEWIS.

MANY words and sentences are so frequently heard in the mouths of men, that a superficial observer is inclined to believe that they must contain some primary principle, some great rule of action, which it is proper always to have present to the attention, and by which the use of every hour is to be adjusted. Yet, if we consider the conduct of those sententious philosophers, it will often be found that they repeat these aphorisms, merely because they have somewhere heard them, because they have nothing else to say, or because they think venerable

tion gained by such appearances of wisdom, but that no ideas are annexed to the words, and that, according to the old blunder of the followers of Aristotle, their souls are mere pipes or organs, which transmit sounds, but do not understand them.

Of this kind is the well-known and well attested position, that *life is short*, which may be heard among mankind by an attentive auditor, many times a day, but which never yet within my reach of observation left any impression upon the mind; and perhaps, if my readers will turn their thoughts back upon their old friends, they will find it difficult to call a single man to remembrance, who appeared to know that life was short till he was about to lose it.

It is observable that Horace, in his account of the characters of men, as they are diversified by the various influence of time, remarks, that the old man is *dilator, spe langus*—given to procrastination, and inclined to extend his hopes to a great distance. So far are we generally from thinking what we often say of the shortness of life, that at the time when it is necessarily shortest, we form projects which we delay to execute, indulge such expectations as nothing but a long train of events can gratify, and suffer those passions to gain upon us, which are only excusable in the prime of life.

These reflections were lately excited in my mind by an evening's conversation with my friend Prospero, who, at the age of fifty-five, has bought an estate, and is now contriving to dispose and cultivate it with uncommon elegance. His great pleasure is to walk among stately trees, and lie musing in the heat of noon under their shade; he is therefore maturely considering how he shall dispose his walks and his groves, and has at last determined to send for the best plans from Italy, and forbear planting till the next season.

Thus is life trifled away in preparations to do what never can be done, if it be left unattempted till all the requisites which imagination can suggest are gathered together. Where our design terminates only in our own satisfaction, the mistake is of no great importance; for the

the pleasure of expecting enjoyment is often greater than that of obtaining it, and the completion of almost every wish is found a disappointment; but when many others are interested in an undertaking, when any design is formed, in which the improvement or security of mankind is involved, nothing is more unworthy, either of wisdom or benevolence, than to delay it from time to time, or to forget how much every day that passes over us takes away from our power, and how soon an idle purpose to do an action sinks into a mournful wish that it had once been done.

We are frequently importuned, by the bacchanalian writers, to lay hold on the present hour, to catch the pleasures within our reach, and remember that futurity is not at our command.

*Τὸ ρόδον ἀκμάζει βραὺν χρόνον. ἦν δὲ παρέλθῃς,
Ζητῶν εὐρησεις ἔρῳδον, ἀλλὰ βράτον.*

Soon fades the rose; once past the fragrant hour,
The loiterer finds a bramble for a flow'r.

But surely these exhortations may, with equal propriety, be applied to better purposes; it may be at least inculcated, that pleasures are more safely postponed than virtues, and that greater loss is suffered by missing an opportunity of doing good, than an hour of giddy frolic and noisy merriment.

When Baxter had lost a thousand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a school, he used frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of bestowing, and considered himself as culpable in some degree for having left a good action in the hands of chance, and suffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickness and diligence.

It is lamented by Hearne, the learned antiquary of Oxford, that this general forgetfulness of the fragility of life, has remarkably infected the students of monuments and records; as their employment consists first in collecting

esting, and afterwards in arranging or abstracting what libraries afford them, they ought to amass no more than they can digest; but when they have undertaken a work, they go on searching and transcribing, call for new supplies when they are already overburthened, and at last leave their work unfinished. 'It is,' says he, 'the business of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him.'

Thus, not only in the slumber of sloth, but in the dissipation of ill-directed industry, is the shortness of life generally forgotten. As some men lose their hours in business, because they suppose that there is time enough for the reparation of neglect, others busy themselves in providing that no length of life may want employment; and it often happens that sluggishness and activity are equally surprised by the last summons, and perish not more differently from each other than the fowl that received the shot in her flight, from her that is killed upon the bush.

Among the many improvements made by the last centuries in human knowledge, may be numbered the exact calculations of the value of life; but, whatever may be their use in traffic, they seem very little to have advanced morality. They have hitherto been rather applied to the acquisition of money than of wisdom; the computer offers none of his calculations to his own tenure, but exists, in contempt of probability, to foretell old age to himself, and believes that he is marked out to reach the utmost verge of human existence, and see thousands and thousands fall into the grave.

So deeply is this fallacy rooted in the heart, and so strongly guarded by hope and fear against the approach of reason, that neither science nor experience can shake it, and we act as if life were without end, though we see and confess its uncertainty and shortness.

Divines have, with great strength and ardour, shewn the absurdity of delaying reformation and repentance; the degree of folly, indeed, which sets eternity to hazard. It is the same weakness, in proportion to the importance

of

of the neglect, to transfer any care which now claims our attention, to a future time; we subject ourselves to needless dangers from accidents which early diligence would have obviated, or perplex our minds by vain precautions, and make provision for the execution of designs of which the opportunity once missed never will return.

As he that lives longest lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waste. The duties of life are commensurate to its duration, and every day brings its task; which if neglected is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away the months and years, in which he should have laboured, must remember that he has now only a part of that which the whole is little; and that since the few moments remaining are to be considered as the last trust of Heaven, not one is to be lost.

No. LXXII. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1750.

Omnis Aristippum decuit status, et color, et res,
Sectantem majora fere; presentibus æquum.

Yet Aristippus ev'ry dress became;
In ev'ry various change of life the same;
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,
Yet to the present held an equal mind.

FRANCIS.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

THOSE who exalt themselves into the chair of instruction, without enquiring whether any will submit to their authority, have not sufficiently considered how much of human life passes in little incidents, casual conversation, slight business, and casual amusements; and therefore they have endeavoured only to inculcate the more awful virtues, without condescending to regulate the

of petty qualities which grow important only by their frequency, and which, though they produce no single act of heroism, nor astonish us by great events, yet are every moment exerting their influence upon us, and make the draught of life sweet or bitter by imperceptible variations. They operate unseen and unregarded, as a change of air makes us sick or healthy, though we breathe it without attention, and only know the particles that impregnate it by their salutary or malignant effects.

You have shewn yourself not ignorant of the value of these subaltern endowments, yet have hitherto neglected to recommend Good-Humour to the world, though a little reflection will shew you that it is the *balm of being*, a quality to which all that adorns or elevates mankind must owe its power of pleasing. Without good-humour, valour and bravery can only confer that superiority which swells the heart of the lion in the desert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without resistance. Without good-humour virtue may awe by its dignity, and amaze by its brightness; but must always be viewed at a distance, and will scarcely gain a friend or attract an imitator.

Good-humour may be defined a habit of being pleased; constant and perennial softness of manner, easiness of approach, and suavity of disposition; like that which every man perceives in himself when the first transports of new felicity have subsided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a slow succession of soft impulses. Good-humour is a state between gaiety and unconcern; the act or emanation of a mind at leisure to regard the satisfaction of another.

It is imagined by many, that whenever they aspire to pleasure, they are required to be merry, and to shew the nakedness of their souls by flights of pleasantry and bursts of laughter. But though these men may be for a time rewarded with applause and admiration, they seldom delight long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to ease and good-humour, as the eye gazes a while on eminences

H

nences

nences glittering with the sun, but soon turns away to verdure and to flowers.

Gaiety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance; the one overpowers weak spirits, the other recreates and revives them. Gaiety seldom fails to give some pain; the hearers either strain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or are left behind in envy and despair. Good-humour boasts no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleases principally by not offending.

It is well known that the most certain way to give a man pleasure is to persuade him that you receive pleasure from him, to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any such appearance of superiority as may overbear and depress him. We see many that by their art only spend their days in the midst of caresses, flatteries, and civilities; and without any extraordinary qualities or attainments, are the universal favourites of both sexes, and certainly find a friend in every place. The darlings of the world will, indeed, be generally free from such as excite neither jealousy nor fear, and are not considered as candidates for any eminent degree of reputation, but content themselves with common accomplishments, and endeavour rather to solicit kindness than to raise esteem; therefore in assemblies and places of resort it seldom fails to happen that though at the entrance some particular person every face brightens with gladness, and every hand is extended in salutation, yet if you pursue him beyond the first exchange of civilities, you will find him of very small importance, and not so welcome to the company as one by whom all content themselves admired, and with whom any one is at liberty to amuse himself, when he can find no other auditor or companion, as one with whom all are at ease, who will hear a jest without criticism, and a narrative without contradiction, who laughs with every wit, and yields to every disputer.

There are many whose vanity always inclines them to associate with those from whom they have no reason

mortification; and there are times in which the wise and the knowing are willing to receive praise without the hour of deserving it, in which the most elevated mind is willing to descend, and the most active to be at rest. All therefore are at some hour or another fond of companions whom they can entertain upon easy terms, and who will relieve them from solitude without condemning them to vigilance and caution. We are most inclined to love when we have nothing to fear; and he that encourages us to please ourselves will not be long without preference in our affection to those whose learning holds us at the distance of pupils, or whose wit calls all attention from us, and leaves us without importance and without regard.

It is remarked by Prince Henry, when he sees Falstaff lying on the ground, that *he could have better spared a better man*. He was well acquainted with the vices and follies of him whom he lamented; but while his conviction compelled him to do justice to superior qualities, his tenderness still broke out at the remembrance of Falstaff, the cheerful companion, the loud buffoon, with whom he had passed his time in all the luxury of idleness, who had gladdened him with unenvied merriment, and whom he could at once enjoy and despise.

You may perhaps think this account of those who are distinguished for their good-humour, not very consistent with the praises which I have bestowed upon it. But surely nothing can more evidently shew the value of this quality, than that it recommends those who are destitute of all other excellencies, and procures regard to the trifling, friendship to the worthless, and affection to the ungrateful.

Good-humour is indeed generally degraded by the characters in which it is found; for being considered as cheap and vulgar quality, we find it often neglected by those that having excellencies of higher reputation and brighter splendour; perhaps imagine that they have some right to gratify themselves at the expence of others, and to demand compliance, rather than to practise it. It

is by some unfortunate mistake that almost all those who have any claim to esteem or love, press their pretensions with too little consideration of others. This mistake in my own interest, as well as my zeal for general happiness, makes me desirous to rectify; for I have a friend who, because he knows his own fidelity and usefulness, is never willing to sink into a companion: I have a wife whose beauty first subdued me, and whose wit confirmed her conquest; but whose beauty now serves no other purpose than to entitle her to tyranny, and whose wit is only used to justify perverseness.

Surely nothing can be more unreasonable than to let the will to please when we are conscious of the power, or show more cruelty than to chuse any kind of influence before that of kindness. He that regards the welfare of others should make his virtue approachable, that it may be loved and copied; and he that considers the war which every man feels, or will feel, of external assistance must rather wish to be surrounded by those that love him than by those that admire his excellencies, or solicit his favours; for admiration ceases with novelty, and interest gains its end and retires. A man whose great qualities want the ornament of superficial attractions, is like a naked mountain with mines of gold, which will be frequented only till the treasure is exhausted.

I am, &c.

PHILOMIDES.

LXXIII. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1750.

Stulte quid heu votis frustra puerilibus optas
 Quæ non ulla tulit, fertve feretve dies. OVID.

Why thinks the fool, with childish hope, to see
 What neither is, nor was, nor e'er shall be?

ELPHINSTON.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

If you feel any of that compassion which you recommend to others, you will not disregard a case which I have reason from observation to believe very common, and which I know by experience to be very miserable. And though the querulous are seldom received with great ardour of kindness, I hope to escape the mortification of finding that my lamentations spread the contagion of impatience, and produce anger rather than tenderness. I write not merely to vent the swelling of my heart, but to enquire by what means I may recover my tranquillity; and shall endeavour at brevity in my narrative, having long known that complaint quickly tires, however elegant, or however just.

I was born in a remote county, of a family that boasts alliances with the greatest names in English history, and tends its claims of affinity to the Tudors and Plantagenets. My ancestors, by little and little, wasted their patrimony, till my father had not enough left for the support of a family, without descending to the cultivation of his own grounds, being condemned to pay three sisters the fortunes allotted them by my grandfather, who is suspected to have made his will when he was incapable of adjusting properly the claims of his children, and so, perhaps without design, enriched his daughters by beggaring his son. My aunts being, at the death of my father, neither young nor beautiful, nor very eminent for softness of behaviour, were suffered to live unmarried; and by accumulating the interest of their por-

tions grew every day richer and prouder. My father pleased himself with foreseeing that the possessions of those ladies must revert at last to the hereditary estate, and that his family might lose none of its dignity, resolved to keep me untainted with a lucrative employment whenever therefore I discovered any inclination to the improvement of my condition, my mother never failed to put me in mind of my birth, and charged me to do nothing with which I might be reproached when I should come to my aunts estate.

In all the perplexities or vexations which want of money brought upon us, it was our constant practice to have recourse to futurity. If any of our neighbours surpassed us in appearance, we went home and contrived an equipage, with which the death of my aunts was to supply us. If any purse-proud upstart was deficient in respect, vengeance was referred to the time in which our estate was to be repaired. We registered every act of civility and rudeness, enquired the number of dishes at every feast, and minuted the furniture of every house that we might, when the hour of affluence should come, be able to eclipse all their splendor, and surpass all their magnificence.

Upon plans of elegance and schemes of pleasure the day rose and set, and the year went round unregarded while we were busied in laying out plantations on ground not yet our own, and deliberating whether the mansion-house should be rebuilt or repaired. This was the amusement of our leisure, and the solace of our exigencies; we met together only to contrive how our approaching fortune should be enjoyed; for in this conversation always ended, on whatever subject it began. We had none of the collateral interests which diversify the life of others with joys and hopes, but had turned our whole attention on one event, which we could neither hasten nor retard, and had no other object of curiosity than the health or sickness of my aunts, of which we were careful to procure very exact and early intelligence.

This visionary opulence for a while soothed our imagination

ation, but afterwards fired our wishes, and exasperated our necessities; and my father could not always restrain himself from exclaiming, that *no creature had so many lives as a cat and an old maid*. At last, upon the recovery of his sister from an ague, which she was supposed to have caught by sparing fire, he began to lose his stomach; and four months afterwards sunk into the grave.

My mother, who loved her husband, survived him but a little while, and left me the sole heir of their lands, their schemes, and their wishes. As I had not enlarged my conceptions, either by books or conversation, I differed only from my father by the freshness of my cheeks and the vigour of my step; and, like him, gave way to no thoughts but of enjoying the wealth which my aunts were hoarding.

At length the eldest fell ill. I paid the civilities and compliments which sickness requires with the utmost punctuality. I dreamed every night of escutcheons and white gloves, and enquired every morning at an early hour, whether there were any news of my dear aunt? At last a messenger was sent to inform me, that I must come to her without the delay of a moment. I went and heard her last advice; but opening her will, found that she had left her fortune to her second sister.

I hung my head; the younger sister threatened to be married, and every thing was disappointment and discontent. I was in danger of losing irreparably one third of my hopes, and was condemned still to wait for the rest. Of part of my terror I was soon eased; for the youth, whom his relations would have compelled to marry the old lady, after innumerable stipulations, articles, and settlements, ran away with the daughter of his father's groom; and my aunt, upon this conviction of the perfidy of man, resolved never to listen more to amorous addresses.

Ten years longer I dragged the shackles of expectation, without ever suffering a day to pass in which I did not compute how much my chance was improved of being rich to-morrow. At last the second lady died,
after

after a short illness, which yet was long enough to afford her time for the disposal of her estate, which she gave me after the death of her sister.

I was now relieved from part of my misery; a large fortune, though not in my power, was certain and unalienable; nor was there now any danger that I might at last be frustrated of my hopes by a fret of dotage, the flatteries of a chambermaid, the whispers of a tale-bearer, or the officiousness of a nurse. But my wealth was not in reversion, my aunt was to be buried before I could emerge to grandeur and pleasure; and there were yet, according to my father's observation, nine lives between me and happiness.

I however lived on, without any clamours of discontent, and comforted myself with considering that all are mortal; and they who are continually decaying must at last be destroyed.

But let no man from this time suffer his felicity to depend on the death of his aunt. The good gentlewoman was very regular in her hours, and simple in her diet, and in walking or sitting still, waking or sleeping, had always in view the preservation of her health. She was subject to no disorder, but hypochondriac dejection; by which, without intention, she increased my miseries; for whenever the weather was cloudy, she would take her bed, and send me notice that her time was come. I went with all the haste of eagerness, and sometimes received passionate injunctions to be kind to her maid, and directions how the last offices should be performed; but it was before my arrival the sun happened to break out, or the wind to change. I met her at the door, or found her in the garden, bustling and vigilant, with all the tokens of long life.

Sometimes, however, she fell into distempers, and was thrice given over by the doctor; yet she found means of slipping through the gripe of death; and after having tortured me three months at each time with violent alternations of hope and fear, came out of her chamber without any other hurt than the loss of flesh, which in a few weeks she recovered by broths and jellies.

As most have sagacity sufficient to guess at the desires in heir, it was the constant practice of those who were living at second hand, and endeavoured to secure my fortune against the time when I should be rich, to pay my court, by informing me that my aunt began to grow old, that she had lately a bad night, that she coughed violently, and that she could never climb May-hill; or at last, that the autumn would carry her off. Thus was I flattered in the winter with the piercing winds of March, and in summer, with the fogs of September. But she died through spring and fall, and set heat and cold at defiance; till, after near half a century, I buried her on the fourteenth of last June, aged ninety-three years, five months, and six days.

For two months after her death I was rich; and was satisfied with that obsequiousness and reverence which wealth instantaneously procures. But this joy is now past, and I have returned again to my old habit of wishing. Being accustomed to give the future full power over my mind, and to start away from the scene before me to some expected enjoyment, I deliver up myself to the tyranny of every desire which fancy suggests, and long for a thousand things which I am unable to procure. Money has much less power than is ascribed to it by those that want it. I had formed schemes which I cannot execute, I had supposed events which do not come to pass, and the rest of my life must pass in craving solicitude, unless you can find some remedy for a mind, corrupted with an inveterate disease of wishing, and unable to think on any thing but wants, which reason tells me will never be supplied.

I am, &c.

CUPIDUS.

No. LXXIV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1750.

Rixatur de lana sæpe caprina.

HOR.

For nought tormented, she for nought torments.

ELPHINSTON.

MEN seldom give pleasure where they are not pleased themselves; it is necessary, therefore, to cultivate an habitual alacrity and cheerfulness, that in whatever state we may be placed by Providence, whether we are appointed to confer or receive benefits, to implore or afford protection, we may secure the love of those with whom we transact. For though it is generally imagined, that he who grants favours may spare any attention to his behaviour, and that usefulness will always procure friends, yet it has been found that there is an art of granting requests, an art very difficult of attainment; that officiousness and liberality may be so adulterated as to lose the greater part of their effect; that compliance may provoke, relief may harass, and liberality distress.

No disease of the mind can more fatally disable it from benevolence, the chief duty of social beings, than ill-humour or peevishness; for though it breaks not out in paroxysms of outrage, nor bursts into clamour, turbulence, and bloodshed, it wears out happiness by slow corrosion, and small injuries incessantly repeated. It may be considered as the canker of life, that destroys its vigour and checks its improvement, that creeps on with hourly depredations, and faints and vitiates what it cannot consume.

Peevishness, when it has been so far indulged as to outrun the motions of the will, and discover itself without premeditation, is a species of depravity in the highest degree disgusting and offensive, because no rectitude of intention, nor softness of address, can ensure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity. While we are courting the favour of a peevish man, and exerting ourselves in the most diligent civility, an unlucky syllable

displeases,

pleases, an unheeded circumstance ruffles and exasperates; and in the moment when we congratulate ourselves upon having gained a friend, our endeavours are frustrated at once, and all our assiduity forgotten in the usual tumult of some trifling irritation.

This troublesome impatience is sometimes nothing more than the symptom of some deeper malady. He that is angry without daring to confess his resentment, or sorrowful without the liberty of telling his grief, is too frequently inclined to give vent to the fermentations of his mind at the first passages that are opened, and to let his passions boil over upon those whom accident throws in his way. A painful and tedious course of sickness frequently produces such an alarming apprehension of the least increase of uneasiness, as keeps the soul perpetually on the watch, such a restless and incessant solicitude as no care or tenderness can appease, and can only be pacified by the cure of the distemper, and the removal of that pain by which it is excited.

Nearly approaching to this weakness is the captiousness of old age. When the strength is crushed, the senses dulled, and the common pleasures of life become insipid by repetition, we are willing to impute our uneasiness to causes not wholly out of our power, and please ourselves with fancying that we suffer by neglect, unkindness, or any evil which admits a remedy, rather than by the decays of nature, which cannot be prevented or repaired. We therefore revenge our pains upon those on whom we resolve to charge them; and too often drive mankind away at the time we have the greatest need of tenderness and assistance.

But though peevishness may sometimes claim our compassion, as the consequence or concomitant of misery, it is very often found where nothing can justify or excuse its admission. It is frequently one of the attendants on the prosperous, and is employed by insolence in exacting homage, or by tyranny in harassing subjection. It is the offspring of idleness or pride; of idleness anxious for trifles; or pride, unwilling to endure the least obstruction of her wishes. Those who have long lived in solitude indeed

indeed naturally contract this unsocial quality, because having long had only themselves to please, they do not readily depart from their own inclinations; their singularities therefore are only blameable when they have imprudently or morosely withdrawn themselves from the world; but there are others, who have, without necessity, nursed up this habit in their minds, by making implicit submissiveness the condition of their favour, and suffering none to approach them but those who need speak but to applaud, or move but to obey.

He that gives himself up to his own fancy, and converses with none but such as he hires to lull him on the down of absolute authority, to sooth him with obsequiousness, and regale him with flattery, soon grows too slothful for the labour of contest, too tender for the asperity of contradiction, and too delicate for the coarseness of truth; a little opposition offends, a little restraint enrages, and a little difficulty perplexes him; having been accustomed to see every thing give way to his humour, he soon forgets his own littleness, and expects to find the world rolling at his beck, and all mankind employed to accommodate and delight him.

Tetrica had a large fortune bequeathed to her by an aunt, which made her very early independent, and placed her in a state of superiority to all about her. Having a superfluity of understanding, she was soon intoxicated by the flatteries of her maid, who informed her that ladies such as she, had nothing to do but take pleasure in their own way; that she wanted nothing from others, and had therefore no reason to value their opinion; that money was every thing; and that they who thought themselves ill-treated, should look for better usage among their equals.

Warm with these generous sentiments, Tetrica came forth into the world, in which she endeavoured to force respect by haughtiness of mien and vehemence of language; but having neither birth, beauty, nor wit, in any uncommon degree, she suffered such mortifications from those who thought themselves at liberty to return her insults, as reduced her turbulence to cooler malignity, and

taught

ought her to practise her arts of vexation only where she might hope to tyrannize without resistance. She continued from her twentieth to her fifty-fifth year to torment all her inferiors with so much diligence, that she formed a principle of disapprobation, and finds in every place something to grate her mind, and disturb her rest.

If she takes the air, she is offended with the heat or cold, the glare of the sun, or the gloom of the clouds; if she makes a visit, the room in which she is to be received is too light or too dark, or furnished with something which she cannot see without aversion. Her tea is never of the right sort; the figures on the china give her disgust. Where there are children, she hates the gabble of boys; where there are none, she cannot bear a place without some cheerfulness and rattle. If many servants are kept in a house, she never fails to tell how Lord B. was ruined by a numerous retinue; if few, she relates the story of a miser that made his company wait on themselves. She quarrelled with one family, because she had an unpleasant view from their windows; with another, because the squirrel leaped within two yards of her; and with a third, because she could not bear the noise of the parrot.

Of milliners and mantua-makers she is the proverbial patient. She compels them to alter their work, then to remake it, and contrive it after another fashion; then changes her mind, and likes it better as it was at first; then will have a small improvement. Thus she proceeds till no profit can recompense the vexation; they at last leave the clothes at her house, and refuse to serve her. Her maid, the only being that can endure her tyranny, professes to take her own course, and hear her mistress talk. Such is the consequence of peevishness; it can be borne only when it is despised.

It sometimes happens that too close an attention to minute exactness, or a too rigorous habit of examining every thing by the standard of perfection, vitiates the temper rather than improves the understanding, and teaches the mind to discern faults with unhappy penetration.

tration. It is incident likewise to men of vigorous imagination to please themselves too much with futurity, and to fret because those expectations are disappointed, which should never have been formed. Knowledge and genius are often enemies to quiet, by suggesting ideas of excellence, which men and the performances of men cannot attain. But let no man rashly determine that his unwillingness to be pleased is a proof of underframing, unless his superiority appears from less doubtful evidence; for though peevishness may sometimes justly boast its descent from learning or from wit, it is more oftener of base extraction, the child of vanity, and the ling of ignorance.

No. LXXV. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1750

Diligitur nemo, nisi cui fortuna secunda est,
Quæ, simul intonuit, proxima quæque fugat.

Ovid.

When smiling fortune spreads her golden ray,
All crowd around to flatter and obey:
But when she thunders from an angry sky,
Our friends, our flatterers, our lovers, fly.

MISS A. W.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

THE diligence with which you endeavour to cultivate the knowledge of nature, manners, and life, will perhaps incline you to pay some regard to the observations of one who has been taught to know mankind by unwelcome information, and whose opinions are the result, not of solitary conjectures, but of practice and experience.

I was born to a large fortune, and bred to the knowledge of those arts which are supposed to accomplish the mind and adorn the person of a woman. To these attainments

inments, which custom and education almost forced on me, I added some voluntary acquisitions by the use of books, and the conversation of that species of men whom the ladies generally mention with terror and aversion, under the name of Scholars, but whom I have found harmless and inoffensive order of beings, not so much inferior than ourselves, but that they may receive as well communicate knowledge; and more inclined to degrade their own character by cowardly submission, than to overbear or oppress us with their learning or their wit.

From these men, however, if they are by kind treatment encouraged to talk, something may be gained, which, embellished with elegance and softened by modesty, will always add dignity and value to female conversation; and from my acquaintance with the bookish part of the world I derived many principles of judgment and maxims of prudence, by which I was enabled to draw upon myself the general regard in every place of concourse or pleasure. My opinion was the great rule of approbation, my remarks were remembered by those who desired the second degree of fame, my mien was studied, my dress was imitated, my letters were handed from one family to another, and read by those who copied them as sent to themselves; my visits were solicited as honours; and multitudes boasted of an intimacy with Melissa, who had only seen me by accident, and whose familiarity had never proceeded beyond the exchange of a compliment, or return of a courtesy.

I shall make no scruple of confessing that I was pleased with this universal veneration, because I always considered it as paid to my intrinsic qualities and inseparable merit, and very easily persuaded myself that fortune had no part in my superiority. When I looked upon my glass I saw youth and beauty, with health that might give me reason to hope their continuance; when I examined my mind, I found some strength of judgment and fertility of fancy; and was told that every action was grace, and that every accent was persuasion.

In this manner my life passed like a continual triumph

amidst acclamations, and envy, and courtship, and reffes: to please Meliffa was the general ambition; and every stratagem of artful flattery was practifed upon me. To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praifes are not believed by thofe who pronounce them; for they prove, at leaft, our power, and fhew that our favour is valued, fince it is purchafed by the means of falfehood. But, perhaps, the flatterer is not often detected, for an honeft mind is not apt to fufpect; and one exerts the power of difcernment with much vigour when felf-love favours the deceit.

The number of adorers, and the perpetual diftraction of my thoughts by new fchemes of pleafure, prevented me from liftening to any of thofe who crowd in multitudes to give girls advice, and kept me unmarried and unengaged to my twenty-feventh year, when, as I was towering in all the pride of uncontefted excellency, with a face yet little impaired, and a mind hourly improving, the failure of a fund in which my money was placed reduced me to a frugal competency, which allowed little beyond neatnefs and independence.

I bore the diminution of my riches without any outrages of forrow, or puftillanimity of dejection. Indeed, I did not know how much I had loft, for, having always heard and thought more of my wit and beauty than of my fortune, it did not fuddenly enter my imagination that Meliffa could fink beneath her eftablifhed rank, while her form and her mind continued the fame; that fhe could ceafe to raife admiration but by ceafing to deferve it, or feel any ftroke but from the hand of time.

It was in my power to have concealed the lofs, and to have married, by continuing the fame appearance, with all the credit of my original fortune; but I was not fo far funk in my own eftem as to fubmit to the baftenefs of fraud, or to defire any other recommendation than confeffion and virtue. I therefore difmiffed my equipage, fold thofe ornaments which were become unfuitable to my new condition, and appeared among thofe with whom I ufed to converse with lefs glitter, but with equal fpirit.

I found

I found myself received at every visit, with sorrow beyond what is naturally felt for calamities in which we have no part, and was entertained with condolence and consolation, so frequently repeated, that my friends chiefly consulted rather their own gratification than my relief. Some from that time refused my acquaintance, and forbore, without any provocation, to repay my visits; some visited me, but after a longer interval than usual, and every return was still with more delay; nor did any of my female acquaintances fail to introduce the mention of my misfortunes, to compare my present and former condition, to tell me how much it must trouble me to want the splendor which I became so well, to look at pleasures which I had formerly enjoyed, and to sink to a level with those by whom I had been considered as moving in a higher sphere, and who had hitherto approached me with reverence and submission, which was now no longer to expect.

Observations like these are commonly nothing better than covert insults, which serve to give vent to the influence of pride, but they are now and then imprudently uttered by honesty and benevolence, and inflict pain where kindness is intended; I will, therefore, so to maintain my antiquated claim to politeness, as to ensure the establishment of this rule, that no one ought to remind another of misfortunes of which the sufferer does not complain, and which there are no means proposed of alleviating. You have no right to excite thoughts which necessarily give pain whenever they return, and which perhaps might not have revived but by absurd and unseasonable compassion.

My endless train of lovers immediately withdrew, without raising any emotions. The greater part had indeed always professed to court, as it is termed, upon the square, had enquired my fortune, and offered settlements; these had undoubtedly a right to retire without censure, since they had openly treated for money, necessary to their happiness, and who can tell how little they wanted any other portion? I have always thought the clamours of women unreasonable, who

imagine themselves injured because the men who followed them upon the supposition of a greater fortune reject them when they are discovered to have less. I have never known any lady who did not think weak a title to some stipulations in her favour; and sure what is claimed by the possession of money is just forfeited by it's loss. She that has once demanded settlement has allowed the importance of fortune; and when she cannot shew pecuniary merit, why should she think her cheapener obliged to purchase?

My lovers were not all contented with silent dejection. Some of them revenged the neglect which they had formerly endured by wanton and superfluous insults, and endeavoured to mortify me, by paying, in my presence, those civilities to other ladies which were once devoted only to me. But, as it had been my rule to treat men according to the rank of their intellect, I had never suffered any one to waste his life in suspension who could have employed it to better purpose, and I had therefore no enemies but coxcombs, whose resentment and respect were equally below my consideration.

The only pain which I have felt from degradation is the loss of that influence which I had always exerted on the side of virtue, in the defence of innocence, and the assertion of truth. I now find my opinions slighted, my sentiments criticised, and my arguments opposed by those that used to listen to me without reply, and I struggle to be first in expressing their conviction.

The female disputants have wholly thrown off all authority; and if I endeavour to enforce my reason by an appeal to the scholars that happen to be present, the wretches are certain to pay their court by sacrificing me and my system to a finer gown, and I am every hour insulted with contradiction by cowards, who could never find till lately that Melissa was liable to error.

There are two persons only whom I cannot charitably suppose with having changed their conduct with my change of fortune. One is an old curate that has passed his life in the duties of his profession, with great reputation

knowledge and piety; the other is a lieutenant of
 goons. The parson made no difficulty in the height
 my elevation to check me when I was pert, and in-
 fect me when I blundered; and if there is any al-
 ation, he is now more timorous lest his freedom
 uld be thought rudeness. The soldier never paid
 any particular addresses, but very rigidly observed
 the rules of politeness, which he is now so far from
 axing, that whenever he serves the tea, he obsti-
 ely carries me the first dish, in defiance of the frowns
 whispers of the table.

This, Mr. Rambler, is *to see the world*. It is im-
 ssible for those that have only known affluence and
 perity, to judge rightly of themselves or others.
 e rich and the powerful live in a perpetual masque-
 e, in which all about them wear borrowed charac-
 s; and we only discover in what estimation we are
 ld, when we can no longer give hopes or fears.

I am, &c.

MELISSA.

LXXVI. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1750.

———*Silvis ubi passim*

Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,

Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit, unus utrique

Error, sed variis illudit partibus.

HOR.

While mazy error draws mankind astray

From truth's sure path, each takes his devious way;

One to the right, one to the left recedes,

Alike deluded, as each fancy leads.

ELPHINSTON.

It is easy for every man, whatever be his character
 with others, to find reasons for esteeming himself;
 and therefore censure, contempt, or conviction of
 crimes, seldom deprive him of his own favour. Those,
 indeed, who can see only external facts, may look
 upon

upon him with abhorrence; but when he calls himself to his own tribunal, he finds every fault, if absolutely effaced, yet so much palliated by the goodness of his intentions, and the cogency of the motives, that very little guilt or turpitude remains; and when he takes a survey of the whole complication of his character, he discovers so many latent excellencies, many virtues that want but an opportunity to exert themselves in act, and so many kind wishes for universal happiness, that he looks on himself as suffering unjustly under the infamy of single failings, while the general temper of his mind is unknown or unregarded.

It is natural to mean well, when only abstracted ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, and no particular passion turns us aside from rectitude; and so willing is every man to flatter himself, that the difference between approving laws, and obeying them, is frequently forgotten; he that acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleases his vanity with enforcing the law to others, concludes himself zealous in the cause of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than they conform to his own desires; and counts himself among her warmest lovers, because he praises her beauty, though every rival steals away his heart.

There are, however, great numbers who have little recourse to the refinements of speculation, but who yet live at peace with themselves, by means which require less understanding, or less attention. When their hearts are burthened with the consciousness of crime, instead of seeking for some remedy within themselves, they look round upon the rest of mankind to find others tainted with the same guilt: they please themselves with observing, that they have numbers on their side; and that, though they are hunted out from the society of good men, they are not likely to be condemned to solitude.

It may be observed, perhaps without exception, that none are so industrious to detect wickedness, or so ready

to impute it, as they whose crimes are apparent confessed. They envy an unblemished reputation, what they envy they are busy to destroy; they are willing to suppose themselves meaner, and more contemptible than others; and therefore willingly pull down their elevations those with whom they cannot come to an equality. No man yet was ever wicked without secret discontent; and, according to the different degrees of remaining virtue, or unextinguished conscience, he either endeavours to reform himself, or to corrupt others; either to regain the station which he has quitted, or prevail on others to imitate his degradation.

It has always been considered as an alleviation of misery not to suffer alone, even when union and society contribute nothing to resistance or escape; some sort of the same kind seems to incite wickedness to seek associates; though, indeed, another reason may be given, for as guilt is propagated, the power of resistance is diminished, and among numbers equally debilitated, every individual may be sheltered from shame, though not from conscience.

Another lenitive by which the throbs of the breast are assuaged, is the contemplation, not of the same, but of different crimes. He that cannot justify himself by his resemblance to others, is ready to try some other expedient, and to enquire what will rise to his advantage from opposition and dissimilitude. He easily finds the faults in every human being, which he weighs against his own, and easily makes them preponderate while he keeps the balance in his own hand, and adds or takes out at his pleasure, circumstances to make them heavier or lighter. He then triumphs in his comparative purity, and sets himself at ease, not because he can refute the charges advanced against him, but because he can censure his accusers with equal justice; and no longer fears the arrows of reproach, when he has stored his magazine of malice with weapons equally sharp and equally envenomed.

This

This practice, though never just, is yet specious and artful, when the censure is directed against deviations to the contrary extreme. The man who is braver with cowardice may, with some appearance of propriety, turn all his force of argument against a frigid contempt of life, and rash precipitation into unnecessary danger. Every recession from temerity is an approach towards cowardice; and though it be confessed that bravery, like other virtues, stands between extremes on either hand, yet the place of the middle point is always be disputed; he may, therefore, often impose upon careless understandings, by turning the attention wholly from himself, and keeping it fixed invariably on the opposite fault; and by shewing how many evils are avoided by his behaviour, he may conceal for a time those which are incurred.

But vice has not always opportunities or address for such artful subterfuges; men often extenuate their guilt, only by vague and general charges upon others, or endeavour to gain rest to themselves by pointing to other prey to the pursuit of censure.

Every whisper of infamy is industriously circulated, every hint of suspicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully published, by those whose interest it is that the eye and voice of the publick should be employed on any rather than on themselves.

All these artifices, and a thousand others equally vain and equally despicable, are incited by that corruption of the deformity of wickedness, from which no man can set himself free; and by an absurd desire to separate the cause from the effects, and to enjoy the profits of crimes without suffering the shame. Men are willing to try all methods of reconciling guilt and quietness, when their understandings are stubborn and unyielding, raise their passions against them, and hope to overpower their own knowledge.

It is generally not so much the desire of men, fallen into depravity, to deceive the world as themselves; for when no particular circumstances make them dependent on others, infamy disturbs them little, but as

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LXXV

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lives their remorse, and is echoed to them from their hearts. The sentence most dreaded is that of conscience, which they would engage on their side at any price but the labours of duty and the pangs of repentance. For this purpose every sentiment and fallacy is sought, the hopes still rest on some new experiment till life is at an end; and the last hour steals on unperceived, while the faculties are engaged in resisting reason, and repressing the sense of the Divine disapprobation.

LXXVII. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1750.

*Os dignum æterno nitidum quod fulgeat auro,
Si mallet laudare Deum, cui fordida monstra
Prætulit, & liquidam temperavit crimine vocem.*

PRUDENT.

A golden statue such a wit might claim,
Had God and virtue rais'd the noble flame;
But, ah! how lewd a subject has he sung,
What vile obscenity profanes his tongue!

F. LEWIS.

AMONG those whose hopes of distinction, or riches, arise from an opinion of their intellectual attainments, it has been, from age to age, an established custom to complain of the ingratitude of mankind to their instructors, and the discouragement which men of letters and study suffer from avarice and ignorance, from the prevalence of false taste, and the encroachment of dissipation.

Men are most powerfully affected by those evils which themselves feel, or which appear before their own eyes; and as there has never been a time of such general festivity, but that many have failed to obtain the rewards which they had, in their own judgment, a just claim, the offended writer has always declaimed, in the rage of disappointment, against his age or nation; nor is there one who has not fallen upon times more unfavourable

avourable to learning than any former century, or does not wish that he had been reserved in the inability of non-existence to some happier hour, when literary merit shall no longer be despised, and the and careffes of mankind shall recompense the toil of study, and add lustre to the charms of wit.

Many of these clamours are undoubtedly to be considered only as the bursts of pride never to be satisfied as the prattle of affectation mimicking distresses, or as the common-places of vanity solicitous for splendour of sentences, and acuteness of remark. Yet cannot be denied that frequent discontent must proceed from frequent hardships; and though it is evident, not more than one age or people can deserve the future of being more averse from learning than any other, yet at all times knowledge must have encountered impediments, and wit been mortified with contempt, harassed with persecution.

It is not necessary, however, to join immediately the outcry, or to condemn mankind as pleased with ignorance, or always envious of superior abilities. The miseries of the learned have been related by themselves, and since they have not been found exempt from the partiality with which men look upon their own actions and sufferings, we may conclude that they have forgotten to deck their cause with the brightest ornaments, and strongest colours. The logician collected his subtilties when they were to be employed in his defence; and the master of rhetorick exerted against his adversary all the arts by which hatred is embittered and indignation inflamed.

To believe no man in his own cause, is the standard and perpetual rule of distributive justice. Since, therefore, in the controversy between the learned and the enemies, we have only the pleas of one party, of a party more able to delude our understandings, and engage our passions, we must determine our opinions on facts uncontested, and evidences on each side allowed to be genuine.

By this procedure, I know not whether the student

will find their cause promoted, or the compassion which they expect much increased. Let their conduct be impartially surveyed; let them be allowed no longer to attract attention at their pleasure, by expatiating on their own deserts; let neither the dignity of knowledge over-awe the judgment, nor the graces of elegance seduce it. It will then, perhaps, be found, that they are not able to produce claims to kinder treatment, and provoked the calamities which they suffered, and seldom wanted friends but when they wanted virtue.

That few men, celebrated for theoretick wisdom, live with conformity to their precepts, must be readily confessed; and we cannot wonder that the indignation of mankind rises with great vehemence against those who neglect the duties which they appear to know with so strong conviction the necessity of performing. Yet since no man has power of acting equal to that of thinking, I know not whether the speculatist may not sometimes incur censures too severe, and by those who form ideas of his life from their knowledge of his books, be considered as worse than others, only because he was expected to be better.

He by whose writings the heart is rectified, the appetites counteracted, and the passions repressed, may be considered as not unprofitable to the great republic of humanity, even though his behaviour should not always exemplify his rules. His instructions may diffuse their influence to regions in which it will not be required, whether the author be *albus an ater*—good or bad; to times when all his faults and all his follies shall be lost in forgetfulness, among things of no concern or importance to the world; and he may kindle in thousands and ten thousands that flame which burnt but dimly in himself, through the fumes of passion, or the damps of cowardice. The vicious moralist may be considered as a taper, by which we are lighted through the labyrinth of complicated passions; he extends his radiance farther than his heat, and guides all that are within view, but burns only those who make too near approaches.

Yet since good or harm must be received for the part from those to whom we are familiarly known, whose vices overpower his virtues, in the compass which his vices can extend, has no reason to complain that he meets not with affection or veneration, who those with whom he passes his life are more corrupted by his practice than enlightened by his ideas. Admiration begins where acquaintance ceases; and his favourers are distant, but his enemies at hand.

Yet many have dared to boast of neglected merit and to challenge their age for cruelty and folly, whom it cannot be alledged that they have endeavoured to increase the wisdom or virtue of their readers. They have been at once profligate in their lives, and licentious in their compositions; have not only forsaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure others after them. They have smoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of guilt, and taught temptation sweeter notes, softer blandishments, and stronger allurements.

It has been apparently the settled purpose of some writers, whose powers and acquisitions place them high in the rank of literature, to set fashion on the side of wickedness; to recommend debauchery and lewdness by associating them with qualities most likely to damage the discernment and attract the affections; and to throw innocence and goodness with such attendant weaknesses as necessarily expose them to contempt and derision.

Such naturally found intimates among the common the thoughtless, and the intemperate; passed their lives amidst the levities of sportive idleness, or the warm professions of drunken friendship; and fed their hopes with the promises of wretches, whom their predecessors had taught to scoff at truth. But when fools began to laugh away their sprightliness, and the languorous excess could no longer be relieved, they saw their protectors hourly drop away, and wondered and strove to find themselves abandoned. Whether their companions persisted in wickedness, or returned to virtue

were left equally without assistance; for debauchery is selfish and negligent, and from virtue the virtuous only can expect regard.

It is said by Florus of Catiline, who died in the midst of slaughtered enemies, that *that his death had illustrious, had it been suffered for his country.* Of those who have languished away life under the pressure of poverty, or in the restlessness of suspense, calld and rejected, flattered and despised, as they were of more or less use to those who stiled themselves their patrons, it might be observed, that their miseries would have procured compassion, had they been brought upon them by honesty and religion.

The wickedness of a loose or profane author is more odious than that of the giddy libertine, or drunken debaucher; not only because it extends its effects wider, as a pestilence that taints the air is more destructive than poison infused in a draught, but because it is committed with cool deliberation. By the instantaneous violence of desire, a good man may sometimes be surpris'd before reflection can come to his rescue; when his appetites have strengthened their influence by habit, they are not easily resisted or suppressed; but for the cold villainy of studious lewdness, for the calm maturity of laboured impiety, what apology can be interposed? What punishment can be adequate to the crime of him who retires to solitudes for the refinement of idleness; who tortures his fancy, and ransacks his memory, only that he may leave the world less virtuous when he found it; that he may intercept the hopes of a rising generation, and spread snares for the soul with more dexterity?

What were their motives, or what their excuses, is now the dignity of reason to examine. If having acquiesced in themselves the distinction of right and wrong, they were insensible of the mischief which they promoted, they deserved to be hunted down by the general compact, as no longer partaking of social nature: influenced by the corruption of patrons, or readers, they sacrificed their own convictions to vanity or interest,

terest, they were to be abhorred with more acrimony than he that murders for pay; since they commit greater crimes without greater temptations.

Of him, to whom much is given, much shall be required. Those whom God has favoured with superior faculties, and made eminent for quickness of intuition and accuracy of distinctions, will certainly be regarded as culpable in his eye, for defects and deviations which in souls less enlightened, may be guiltless. But, surely none can think without horror on that man's condition who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and used the light imparted from Heaven only to embellish folly, and shed lustre upon crimes.

No. LXXVIII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1750

—Mors sola fatetur
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.

Death only this mysterious truth unfolds,
The mighty soul how small a body holds.

DR. JENKINS

CORPORAL sensation is known to depend much upon novelty, that custom takes away from many things their power of giving pleasure or pain. Thus a new dress becomes easy by wearing it, and the palate is reconciled by degrees to dishes which at first disgusted it. That by long habit of carrying a burden we lose, in great part, our sensibility of it's weight, and a man may be convinced by putting on for an hour the armour of our ancestors; for he will scarcely believe that men would have had much inclination to march and battles, encumbered and oppressed, as he will find himself, with the ancient panoply. Yet the heroes that overrun regions, and stormed towns in iron accoutrements, he knows not to have been bigger, and has no reason to imagine them stronger than the present race of men; he therefore must conclude, that their peculiar

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powers were conferred only by peculiar habits, and that their familiarity with the dress of war enabled them to move in it with ease, vigour, and agility.

Yet it seems to be the condition of our present state, that pain should be more fixed and permanent than pleasure. Uneasiness gives way by slow degrees, and long before it quits it's possession of the sensory; but all our gratifications are volatile, vagrant, and easily dissipated. The fragrance of the jessamine bower is lost after the enjoyment of a few moments, and the Indian wanders among his native spices without any sense of their exhalations. It is, indeed, not necessary to shew by many instances what all mankind confess, by an incessant call for variety, and restless pursuit of enjoyments, which they value only because unpossessed.

Something similar, or analogous, may be observed in effects produced immediately upon the mind; nothing can strongly strike or affect us, but what is rare or sudden. The most important events, when they become familiar, are no longer considered with wonder or solicitude, and that which at first filled up our whole attention, and left no place for any other thought, is soon thrust aside into some remote repository of the mind, and lies among other lumber of the memory, overlooked and neglected. Thus far the mind resembles the body, but here the similitude is at an end.

The manner in which external force acts upon the body is very little subject to the regulation of the will; no man can at pleasure obtund or invigorate his senses, prolong the agency of an impulse, or continue the presence of any image traced upon the eye, or any sound infused into the ear. But our ideas are more subject to choice; we can call them before us, and command their stay; we can facilitate and promote their recurrence, we can either repress their intrusion, or hasten their retreat. It is therefore the business of wisdom and virtue, to select among numberless objects striving for our notice, such as may enable us to exalt our reason, extend our views, and secure our happiness. But this choice is to be made with very little regard to

rareness or frequency; for nothing is valuable merely because it is either rare or common, but because it is adapted to some useful purpose, and enables us to supply some deficiency of our nature.

Milton has judiciously represented the father of mankind, as seized with horror and astonishment at the sight of death, exhibited to him on the Mount of Vision. For, surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature; a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change not only of the place, but the manner of his being; an entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which perhaps he has not faculties to know; an immediate and perceptible communication with the Supreme Being, and, what is above all distressful and alarming, the final sentence, and unalterable allotment.

Yet we to whom the shortness of life has given frequent occasions of contemplating mortality, can without emotion, see generations of men pass away, and are at leisure to establish modes of sorrow, and adjust the ceremonial of death. We can look upon funeral pomp as a common spectacle in which we have no concern, and turn away from it to trifles and amusements, without dejection of look, or inquietude of heart.

It is, indeed, apparent from the constitution of the world, that there must be a time for other thoughts; and a perpetual mediation upon the last hour, however it may become the solitude of a monastery, is inconsistent with many duties of common life. But surely the remembrance of death ought to predominate in our minds, as an habitual and settled principle, always operating, though not always perceived; and our attention should seldom wander so far from our own condition as not to be recalled and fixed by sight of an event, which must soon, we know not how soon, happen likewise to ourselves, and of which, though we cannot appoint the time, we may secure the consequence.

Every instance of death may justly awaken our fears and quicken our vigilance; but its frequency so much
weakens

...kens its effect, that we are seldom alarmed unless
 ...e close connection is broken, some scheme frustrated,
 ...ome hope defeated. Many therefore seem to pass
 ...from youth to decrepitude without any reflection on
 ...the end of life, because they are wholly involved within
 ...themselves, and look on others only as inhabitants of
 ...a common earth, without any expectation of receiv-
 ...ing good, or intention of bestowing it.

Events, of which we confess the importance, excite
 ...the sensibility, unless they affect us more nearly than
 ...shareers in the common interest of mankind; that de-
 ...sire which every man feels of being remembered and
 ...honoured, is often mortified when we remark how little
 ...concern is caused by the eternal departure even of those
 ...who have passed their lives with publick honours, and
 ...are distinguished by extraordinary performances. It
 ...is not possible to be regarded with tenderness, except by
 ...a few. That merit which gives greatness and renown,
 ...diffuses its influence to a wide compass, but acts weakly
 ...on every single breast; it is placed at a distance from
 ...the common spectators, and shines like one of the remote
 ...stars, of which the light reaches us, but not the heat.
 ...The wit, the hero, the philosopher, whom their tem-
 ...pers or their fortunes have hindered from intimate re-
 ...lations, die, without any other effect than that of ad-
 ...ding a new topick to the conversation of the day.
 ...They impress none with any fresh conviction of the
 ...fragility of our nature, because none had any particular
 ...interest in their lives, or was united to them by a reci-
 ...procation of benefits and endearments.

Thus it often happens, that those who in their lives
 ...are applauded and admired, are laid at last in the
 ...ground without the common honour of a stone; be-
 ...cause by those excellencies with which many were de-
 ...lighted, none had been obliged; and, though they had
 ...many to celebrate, they had none to love them.

Custom so far regulates the sentiments, at least of
 ...common minds, that I believe men may be generally
 ...taught to grow less tender as they advance in age.
 ...He who, when life was new, melted at the loss of
 ...every

every companion, can look in time, without conceiving upon the grave into which his last friend was thrown, and into which himself is ready to fall; not that he is more willing to die than formerly, but that he is more familiar to the death of others, and therefore is not alarmed so far as to consider how much nearer he approaches his end. But this is to submit tamely to the tyranny of accident, and to suffer our reason to lie useless. Every funeral may justly be considered as a summons to prepare for that state into which it shews us that we must sometime enter; and the summons is more loud and piercing, as the event of which it warns us is less distance. To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege; but to omit in old age, is to sleep at an attack.

It has always appeared to me one of the most striking passages in the visions of Quevedo, which stigmatizes those as fools who complain that they failed of happiness by sudden death. 'How,' says he, 'can death be sudden to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain?'

Since business and gaiety are always drawing our attention away from a future state, some admonition is frequently necessary to recall it to our minds; and what can more properly renew the impression than the examples of mortality which every day supplies? The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we must die; it will therefore be useful to accustom ourselves whenever we see a funeral, to consider how soon we may be added to the number of those whose probation is past, and whose happiness or misery shall endure forever.

LXXIX. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1750.

Tam sæpe nostrum decipi fabullum, quid
Miraris, aule? Semper bonus homo tiro est. MART.

You wonder I've so little wit,
Friend John, so often to be bit:
None better guard against a cheat
Than he who is a knave complete. F. LEWIS.

SUSPICION, however necessary it may be to our safe passage through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common measures, as a token of depravity and corruption; and a Greek writer of sentences has laid down as a standing maxim, that *he who believes not another on his oath, knows himself to be perjured*.

We can form our opinions of that which we know not, only by placing it in comparison with something that we know: whoever, therefore, is overrun with suspicion, and detects artifice and stratagem in every proposal, must either have learned by experience or observation the wickedness of mankind, and been taught to avoid fraud by having often suffered or seen treachery; or he must derive his judgment from the consciousness of his own disposition, and impute to others the same inclinations which he feels predominant in himself.

To learn caution by turning our eyes upon life, and observing the arts by which negligence is surpris'd, timidity overborne, and credulity amused, requires either great latitude of converse, and long acquaintance with business, or uncommon activity of vigilance, and acuteness of penetration. When therefore a young man, not distinguished by vigour of intellect, comes into the world full of scruples and diffidence; makes a bargain with many provisional limitations; hesitates in his answer to a common question, lest more should be intended than he can immediately discover; has a long reach

in detecting the projects of his acquaintance; considers every care as an act of hypocrisy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection from the tenderness of his friends, because he believes no one to have any tenderness but for himself; whatever expectations his early sagacity may raise of his future eminence or riches, I can seldom forbear to consider him as a wretch incapable of generosity or benevolence, as a villain engaged beyond the need of common opportunities and gradual temptations.

Upon men of this class, instruction and admonition are generally thrown away, because they consider artifice and deceit as proofs of understanding; they are misled at the same time by the two great seducers of the world, vanity and interest; and not only look upon those who act with openness and confidence, as condemned by their principles to obscurity and want, but as contemptible for narrowness of comprehension, shortness of views, and slowness of contrivance.

The world has been long amused with the mention of policy in publick transactions, and of art in private affairs; they have been considered as the effects of great qualities, and as unattainable by men of the common level: yet I have not found many performances, either of art or policy, that required such stupendous efforts of intellect, or might not have been effected by falsehood and impudence, without the assistance of any other powers. To profess what he does not mean, to promise what he cannot perform, to flatter ambition with prospects of promotion, and misery with hopes of relief; to soothe pride with appearances of submission, and appease enmity by blandishments and bribes; can surely imply nothing more or greater than a mind devoted wholly to its own purposes, a face that cannot blush, and a heart that cannot feel.

These practices are so mean and base, that he who finds in himself no tendency to use them, cannot easily believe that they are considered by others with less detestation: he therefore suffers himself to slumber in false security, and becomes a prey to those who ap-

plaud

and their own subtilty, because they know how to
 upon his sleep, and exult in the success which they
 and never have obtained, had they not attempted a
 better than themselves, who was hindered from
 their stratagems, not by folly, but by inno-
 cence.

Suspicion is, indeed, a temper so uneasy and restless,
 it is very justly appointed the concomitant of guilt.
 is said, that no torture is equal to the inhibition of
 long continued; a pain to which the state of that
 bears a very exact analogy who dares never give
 to his vigilance and circumspection, but considers
 himself as surrounded by secret foes, and fears to intrust
 children, or his friend, with the secret that throbs
 his breast, and the anxieties that break into his face.
 To avoid, at this expence, those evils to which easiness
 and friendship might have exposed him, is surely to buy
 safety at too dear a rate, and, in the language of the
 Roman satirist, to save life by losing all for which a wise
 man would live.

When in the diet of the German empire, as Came-
 rius relates, the princes were once displaying their fe-
 licity, and each boasting the advantages of his own do-
 minions, one who possessed a country not remarkable
 for the grandeur of its cities, or the fertility of its soil,
 used to speak, and the rest listened between pity and
 contempt, till he declared, in honour of his territories,
 that he could travel through them without a guard,
 and, if he was weary, sleep in safety upon the lap of
 the first man whom he should meet; a commendation
 which would have been ill exchanged for the boast of
 places, pastures, or fireams.

Suspicion is not less an enemy to virtue than to hap-
 piness: he that is already corrupt is naturally suspi-
 cious, and he that becomes suspicious will quickly be
 corrupt. It is too common for us to learn the frauds
 by which ourselves have suffered; men who are once
 persuaded that deceit will be employed against them,
 sometimes think the same arts justified by the necessity
 of defence. Even they whose virtue is too well esta-
 blished

blished to give way to example, or be shaken by sophistry, must yet feel their love of mankind diminished with their esteem, and grow less zealous for the happiness of those by whom they imagine their own happiness endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which suspicion has been strongly impressed by long intercourse with the world, inflexible and severe, not easily softened by submission, melted by complaint, or subdued by supplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited mercies, and dissembled virtue, in time overcomes that disposition to tenderness and sympathy, which is so powerful in our younger years; and they that happen to petition the old for compassion or assistance, are doomed to languish without regard, and suffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeserving or ungrateful.

Historians are certainly chargeable with the depreciation of mankind, when they relate without censure those stratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his destruction. A ship comes before a port, weather-beaten and shattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, supplying themselves with necessaries, or burying the dead. The humanity of the inhabitants incline them to consent, the strangers enter the town with weapons concealed, fall suddenly upon their benefactors, destroy those that make resistance, and become masters of the place: they return home rich with plunder, and the success is recorded to encourage imitation.

But surely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with some regard to the universal interest of man. Those may justly be pursued as enemies to the community of nature, who suffer hostility to vacate the unalterable laws of right, and pursue their private advantage by means of which, if once established, must destroy kindness, cut off from every man all hopes of assistance from another, and fill the world with perpetual suspicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be restored; and those who have

conquered

conquered by such treachery may be justly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the annihilation of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to write robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to oppress tenderness by suspicion. It is better to suffer wrong than to do it; and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

No. LXXX. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1759.

Vides ut altâ stet nive candidum
Soraete, nec jam sustineant onus
Silvæ laborantes——

Hog.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height,
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the lab'ring woods below. DRYDEN,

AS Providence has made the human soul an active being, always impatient for novelty, and struggling for something yet unenjoyed with unwearied progression, the world seems to have been eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity, and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning we watch the rising of the sun, and see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects in its gradual advance. After a few hours, we see the shades lengthen, and the light decline, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shining orbes different

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from each other in magnitude and splendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvest; the hill flatters with an extensive view, and the valley invites with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the golden age, an exemption from the change of seasons, and a perpetuity of spring; but I am not certain that in this state of imaginary happiness they have made sufficient provision for that insatiable demand of new gratifications, which seems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our sense of delight is in a great measure comparative, and arises at once from the sensations which we feel, and those which we remember: thus ease after torment is pleasure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated, when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural trepidity; but the joy ceases when we have forgot the cold, we must fall below ease again, if we desire to rise above it, and purchase new felicity by voluntary pain. It is therefore not unlikely that, however the fancy may be amused with the description of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no scenes are displayed but vallies enamelled with unfading flowers and woods waving their perennial verdure, we shall soon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languish for want of other subjects, call on Heaven for our wonted round of seasons, and think ourselves liberally recompensed for the inconveniencies of summer and winter, by new perceptions of the calmness and mildness of the intermediate variations.

Every season has it's particular power of striking the mind. The nakedness and asperity of the winter world always fills the beholder with pensive and profound astonishment; as the variety of the scene is lessened, it's grandeur is increased; and the mind is swelled at once by the mingled ideas of the present and the past, of the beauties which have vanished from the eyes, and the waste and desolation that are now before them.

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It is observed by Milton, that he who neglects to sit in the country in spring, and rejects the pleasures that are then in their first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of *sullenness against nature*. If we allot different duties to different seasons, he may be charged with natural disobedience to the voice of nature who looks on the bleak hills and leafless woods, without seriousness and awe. Spring is the season of gaiety, and winter of terror; in spring the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the groves, and the eye of benevolence sparkles at the sight of happiness and plenty: in the winter, compassion melts at universal calamity, and the tear of softness starts at the wailings of hunger, and the cries of the creation in distress.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge in heaviness and sorrow; nor do I recommend them beyond the degree necessary to maintain in it's full vigour that mutual sympathy and tenderness which, in a world of so much misery, is necessary to the ready discharge of our most important duties. The winter therefore is generally celebrated as the proper season for domestic merriment and gaiety. We are seldom induced by the votaries of pleasure to look abroad for any other purpose, than that we may shrink back with more satisfaction to our coverts, and when we have heard the howl of the tempest, and felt the gripe of the frost, congratulate each other with more gladness upon a close room, an easy chair, a large fire, and a smoking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and conversation. Differences, we know, are never so actually laid asleep, as by some common calamity: an enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the same side those who, by the opposition of inclinations, and difference of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year; and when they have met, and find it their mutual interest to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wish for the continuance of

the social season, with all it's bleakness and all its severities.

To the men of study and imagination the winter generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and silence produce composure of mind, and concentration of ideas; and the privation of external pleasure naturally causes an effort to find entertainment within. This is the time in which those whom literature enables to find amusements for themselves, have more than common convictions of their own happiness. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from most of the diversions which are called in to assist the flight of time, they can find new subjects of enquiry, and preserve themselves from the weariness which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot indeed be expected of all to be poets and philosophers; it is necessary that the greater part of mankind should be employed in the minute business of common life; minute indeed, not if we consider its influence upon our happiness, but if we respect the abilities requisite to conduct it. These must necessarily be more dependent on accident for the means of spending agreeably those hours which their occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on these I would willingly impress such a sense of the value of time, as may incline them to find out for their careless hours amusements of more use and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but strengthen the passions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and profusion, to corruption and to ruin. It is unworthy of a reasonable being to spend any of the little time allotted us without some tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our existence. And though every moment cannot be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the stated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet it should be so spent as to exclude wisdom or virtue.

is without possibility of qualifying us more or less for the better employment of those which are to come.

It is scarcely possible to pass an hour in honest conversation, without being able when we rise from it, to ease ourselves with having given or received some advantages; but a man may shuffle cards, or rattle dice, from noon to midnight, without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other token than his gain or loss, and a confused remembrance of agitated passions, and clamorous alterations.

However, as experience is of more weight than present, any of my readers, who are contriving how to spend the dreary months before them, may consider which of their past amusements fills them now with the greatest satisfaction, and resolve to repeat those recreations of which the pleasure is most durable.

LXXXI. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1750.

Discite justitiam moniti— VIRG.

Hear, and be just.

AMONG questions which have been discussed without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedency or superior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who are, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for it's advancement, and diligence in it's celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alleged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as they are necessary. That the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty

tainly would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress; but which duty ought to be most esteemed, we may continue to debate, without inconvenience, so all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need; for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind; and controversies, merely speculative, are of small importance to themselves, however, they may have sometimes heated a disputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the divine author of our religion it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories; without observing how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity, than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well-meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we can not mistake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us, in our transactions with others, is remarkably clear and comprehensive: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.* A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted, as far as the private conscience requires to be informed; a law of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal principle, they have enquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measure of right, must be

such

as we approve, and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we contain in ourselves, and which, however they may invade upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced as requiring some skill in the direction of justice to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the state of the supplicant, he would desire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is trusted with the publick safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is vested, gives away what is not his own, and, apparently, does to others what he would not that others should do to him. When the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by those laws which regard the great republick of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason the state is not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited their lives by crimes against the laws of common morality, equally acknowledged by all nations, because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite, by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation, in those whom this great rule has been commented and illustrated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish; *debts of justice* and *debts of charity*. The immediate and primary intention of this

this precept is, to establish a rule of justice; and know not whether invention, or sophistry, can find a single difficulty to retard it's application, when it is thus expressed and explained—*Let every man allow the claim of right in another, which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.*

The discharge of the *debts of charity*, or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by justice but as dictated by benevolence, admit in it's own nature greater complication of circumstances, and greater latitude of choice. Justice is indispensable and universally necessary, and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform, and distinct. But beneficence though in general equally enjoined by our religion and equally needful to the conciliation of the living, is yet, for the most part, with regard to single acts, elective and voluntary. We may, certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow in the distribution of kindness something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule, therefore, is not equally determinate and absolute with respect to offices of kindness and acts of liberality, because liberality and kindness, absolutely determined, would lose their nature for how could we be called tender, or charitable for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold?

Yet even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others suffer and want, by considering how we should be affected in the same state; nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule than that of doing what we should then expect from others. It indeed generally happens that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generosity; the same partiality to his own interest inclines one to large expectations, and the other to sparing distributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human nature

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we will scarcely suffer a man groaning under the force of distress, to judge rightly of the kindness of his friends, or think they have done enough till his patience is completed; not therefore what we might wish, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant; since, though we can easily know how much we might claim, it is impossible to determine what we should hope.

But in all enquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occasional virtues, it is safest for minds not distressed with superstitious fears to determine against their own inclinations, and secure themselves from dependency, by doing more than they believe strictly necessary. For of this every man may be certain, that, if he were to exchange conditions with his dependent, he would expect more than, with the utmost exertion of his ardour, he now will prevail upon himself to perform; and when reason has no settled rule, and our passions are striving to mislead us, it is surely the part of a wise man to err on the side of safety.

LXXXII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1750.

Omnia Castor emit, sic fiet ut omnia vendat. MART.

Who buys without discretion, buys to sell.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

It will not be necessary to solicit your good-will by any formal preface, when I have informed you, that I have long been known as the most labourious and zealous virtuoso that the present age has had the honour of producing, and that inconveniencies have been brought upon me by an unextinguishable ardour of curiosity, and an unshaken perseverance in the acquisition of the productions of art and nature.

It was observed, from my entrance into the world, that I had something uncommon in my disposition, and that

that there appeared in me very early tokens of superior genius. I was always an enemy to trifles; the playthings which my mother bestowed upon me I immediately broke, that I might discover the method of their structure, and the causes of their motions: of all the toys with which children are delighted, I valued none more than my coral; and, as soon as I could speak, asked, like Pierese, innumerable questions which the maids about me could not resolve. As I grew older I was more thoughtful and serious; and instead of amusing myself with puerile diversions, made collections of natural rarities, and never walked into the fields without bringing home stones of remarkable forms, or insects of uncommon species. I never entered an old house, from which I did not take away the painted glass, and often lamented that I was not one of that happy generation who demolished the convents and monasteries, and broke the windows by law.

Being thus early possessed by a taste for solid knowledge, I passed my youth with very little disturbance from passions and appetites; and having no pleasure in the company of boys and girls, who talked of play, politicks, fashions, or love, I carried on my enquiries with incessant diligence, and had amassed more stones, mosses, and shells, than are to be found in many celebrated collections, at an age in which the greatest part of young men are studying under tutors, or endeavouring to recommend themselves to notice by their dress, their air, and their levities.

When I was two and twenty years old, I became, by the death of my father, possessed of a small estate in land, with a very large sum of money in the public funds; and must confess that I did not much lament him, for he was a man of mean parts, bent rather upon growing rich than wise. He once fretted at the expence of only ten shillings, which he happened to over-
hear me offering for the sting of a hornet, though it was a cold moist summer, in which very few hornets had been seen. He often recommended to me the study of physick; 'In which,' he said he, 'you may at once

gratify

gratify your curiosity after natural history, and increase your fortune by benefiting mankind.' I heard him, O Rambler, with pity; and as there was no prospect of elevating a mind formed to grovel, suffered him to ease himself with hoping that I should some time follow his advice. For you know that there are men with whom, when they have once settled a notion in their heads, it is to very little purpose to dispute.

Being now left wholly to my own inclinations, I very much enlarged the bounds of my curiosity, and contented myself no longer with such rarities as required only judgment and industry, and when once found, might be had for nothing. I now turned my thoughts to *exotic* and *antiques*; and become so well known for my generous patronage of ingenious men, that my levee was crowded with visitants, some to see my museum, and others to increase it's treasures, by selling me whatever they had brought from other countries.

I had always a contempt for that narrowness of conception, which contents itself with cultivating some single corner of the field of science; I took the whole realm into my view, and wished it of yet greater extent. No man's power can be equal to his will. I was used to proceed by slow degrees, and to purchase what chance or kindness happened to present. I did not ever proceed without some design, or imitate the discretion of those who begin a thousand collections, and finish none. Having been always a lover of geography, I determined to collect the maps drawn in the ancient and barbarous times, before any regular surveys, and must observations; and have, at a great expence, brought together a volume, in which, perhaps, not a single country is laid down according to it's true situation, and by which, he that desires to know the errors of the ancient geographers may be amply informed.

But my ruling passion is patriotism: my chief care has been to procure the products of our own country; as Alfred received the tribute of the Welch in silver heads, I allowed my tenants to pay their rents in butterflies, till I had exhausted the papilionaceous tribe.

tribe. I then directed them to the pursuit of other animals; and obtained, by this easy method, most of the grubs and insects which land, air, or water, can supply. I have three species of earthworms not known to naturalists, have discovered a new ephemera, and shew four wasps that were taken torpid in their winter quarters. I have, from my own ground, the longest blade of grass upon record; and once accepted, as a year's rent for a field of wheat, an ear containing more grains than had been seen before upon a single stem.

One of my tenants so much neglected his own interest, as to supply me, in a whole summer, with only horse-flies, and those of little more than the common size; and I was upon the brink of seizing for arrears when his good fortune threw a white mole in his way for which he was not only forgiven but rewarded.

These, however, were petty acquisitions, and made at small expence; nor should I have ventured to rank myself among the virtuosi without better claims. I have suffered nothing worthy the regard of a wise man to escape my notice: I have ransacked the old and new world; and been equally attentive to past ages and the present. For the illustration of ancient history, I shew a marble, of which the inscription, though it is not now legible, appears, from some broken remains of the letters, to have been Tuscan, and therefore probably engraved before the foundation of Rome. I have several pieces of porphyry found among the ruins of Ephesus, and three letters broken off by a learned traveller from the monuments of Persepolis; a piece of stone which paved the Areopagus of Athens; and a plate, with figures or characters, which was found at Corinth, and which I therefore believe to be that metal which was once valued before gold. I have sand gathered out of the Granicus; a fragment of Trajan's bridge over the Danube; some of the mortar which cemented the outer-course of Tarquin; a horseshoe broken on the Persian way; and a turf with five daisies dug from the field of Pharsalia.

I do not wish to raise the envy of unsuccessful collectors.

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by too pompous a display of my scientifick wealth; cannot forbear to observe, that there are few regions the globe which are not honoured with some memorial in my cabinets. The Persian monarchs are said to have boasted the greatness of their empire, by being served at their tables with drink from the Ganges and Danube: I can shew one vial, of which the water was formerly an icicle on the crags of Caucasus, and another that contains what once was snow on the top of Atlas; in a third is dew brushed from a banana in the gardens of Ispahan; and, in another, brine that has ebbed in the Pacifick ocean. I flatter myself that I am writing to a man who will rejoice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country; and therefore I shall tell you that Britain can, by my care, boast of a snail that has crawled upon the wall of China; a humming-bird which an American princess wore in her ear; the tooth of an elephant who carried the Queen of Siam; the skin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the Great Mogul; a ribbon that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana; and a scymitar once wielded by a soldier of Abas the Great.

In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to chuse only by intrinsic worth, and real usefulness, without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of Cromwell's hair in a box turned from a piece of the royal oak; and keep, in the same drawers, sand scraped from the coffin of King Richard, and a commission signed by Henry the Seventh. I have equal veneration for the ruff of Elizabeth, and the shoe of Mary of Scotland; and should lose, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of Raleigh, and a stirrup of King James. I have paid the same price for a glove of Lewis, and a thimble of Queen Mary; for a fur cap of the Czar, and a boot of Charles of Sweden.

You will easily imagine that these accumulations were not made without some diminution of my fortune; for I was so well known to spare no cost, that at every sale some bid against me for hire, some for sport, and some for malice; and if I asked the price of any thing,

it was sufficient to double the demand. For curiosity trafficking thus with avarice, the wealth of India has not been enough; and I, by little and little, transferred all my money from the funds to my curiosity. Here I was inclined to stop, and live upon my estate in literary leisure; but the sale of the Harleian collection shook my resolution; I mortgaged my land, and purchased thirty medals, which I could never find better. I have at length bought till I can buy no longer, and the cruelty of my creditors has seized my repository. I am therefore condemned to disperse what the labours of an age will not reassemble. I submit to that which cannot be opposed, and shall, in a short time, declare a sale. I have, while it is yet in my power, sent you a pebble, picked up by Tavernier on the banks of the Ganges; for which I desire no other recompence than that you will recommend my catalogue to the publick.

QUISQUILUS.

No. LXXXIII. TUESDAY, JANUARY, 1, 1753

Nisi utile est quod facias stulta est gloria. PHÆD.

All useless science is an empty boast.

THE publication of the letter in my last paper has naturally led me to the consideration of that thing after curiosities, which often draws contempt and ridicule upon itself, but which is perhaps no otherwise blameable, than as it wants those circumstantial commendations which add lustre even to moral excellencies, and are absolutely necessary to the grace and beauty of indifferent actions.

Learning confers so much superiority on those who possess it, that they might probably have escaped censure had they been able to agree among themselves; but as envy and competition have divided the republic of letters into factions, they have neglected the com-

an interest; each has called in foreign aid, and endeavoured to strengthen his own cause by the frown of power, the hiss of ignorance, and the clamour of popularity. They have all engaged in feuds, till by equal hostilities they demolished those outworks which veneration had raised for their security, and exposed themselves to barbarians, by whom every remnant of science is equally laid waste.

Between men of different studies and professions, may be observed a constant reciprocation of reproaches. The collector of shells and stones derides the folly of him who pastes leaves and flowers upon paper, pleases himself with colours that are perceptibly fading, and wastes with care what cannot be preserved. The hunter of insects stands amazed that any man can waste so short time upon lifeless matter, while many tribes of animals yet want their history. Every one is inclined not only to promote his own study, but to exclude all others from regard; and having heated his imagination with some favourite pursuit, wonders that the rest of mankind are not seized with the same passion.

There are, indeed, many subjects of study which are but remotely allied to useful knowledge, and of little importance to happiness or virtue; nor is it easy to forbear some sallies of merriment, or expressions of wit, when we see a man wrinkled with attention, and agitated with solicitude, in the investigation of questions, of which, without visible inconvenience, the world may expire in ignorance. Yet it is dangerous to discourage well-intended labours, or innocent curiosity: he who is employed in searches, which by any deduction of consequences tend to the benefit of life, is surely laudable, in comparison of those who spend their time in counteracting happiness, and filling the world with wrong and danger, confusion and remorse. No man can perform so little as not to have reason to congratulate himself on his merits, when he beholds the multitudes that live in total idleness, and have never endeavoured to be useful.

It is impossible to determine the limits of enquiry, to foresee what consequence a new discovery may produce. He who suffers not his faculties to lie torpid has a chance, whatever be his employment, of doing good to his fellow-creatures. The man that first ranges the woods in search of medicinal springs, or climbs the mountains for salutary plants, has undoubtedly merited the gratitude of posterity, how much soever his frequent miscarriages might excite the scorn of his contemporaries. If what appears little be universally despised, nothing greater can be attained, for all that is great was at first little, and rose to it's present bulk by gradual accessions, and accumulated labours.

Those who lay out time or money in assembling matter for contemplation, are doubtless entitled to some degree of respect, though in a flight of gaiety it be easy to ridicule their treasure, or in a fit of fullness to despise it. A man who thinks only on the particular object before him, goes not away much illuminated by having enjoyed the privilege of handling the tooth of a shark, or the paw of a white bear; yet there is nothing more worthy of admiration to a philosophical eye, than the structure of animals, by which they are qualified to support life in the elements or climates to which they are appropriated; and of all natural bodies it must be generally confessed, that they exhibit evidences of infinite wisdom, bear their testimony to the supreme reason, and excite in the mind new raptures of gratitude, and new incentives to piety.

To collect the productions of art, and examples of mechanical science or manual ability, is unquestionably useful, even when the things themselves are of small importance, because it is always advantageous to know how far the human powers have proceeded, and how much experience has found to be within the reach of diligence. Idleness and timidity often despair without being overcome, and forbear attempts for fear of being defeated; and we may promote the invigoration of faint endeavours, by shewing what has been already performed. It may sometimes happen that the greatest efforts of ingenuity have been exerted

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trifles; yet the same principles and expedients may be applied to more valuable purposes, and the movements, which put into action machines of no use but to raise the wonder of ignorance, may be employed to spin fens, or manufacture metals, to assist the architect, or preserve the sailor.

For the utensils, arms, or dresses of foreign nations, which make the greatest part of many collections, I have little regard when they are valued only because they are foreign, and can suggest no improvement of my own practice. Yet they are not all equally useless, nor can it be always safely determined, which should be rejected or retained: for they may sometimes unexpectedly contribute to the illustration of history, and the knowledge of the natural commodities of the country, or of the genius and customs of its inhabitants.

Rarities there are of yet a lower rank, which owe their worth merely to accident, and which can convey no information, nor satisfy any rational desire. Such are many fragments of antiquity, as urns and pieces of pavement; and things held in veneration only for having been once the property of some eminent person, as the armour of King Henry; or, for having been used on some remarkable occasion, as the lantern of Guy Faux. The loss or preservation of these seems to be a thing indifferent; nor can I perceive why the possession of them should be coveted. Yet, perhaps, even this curiosity is implanted by nature: and when I find myself fully confessing of himself, that he could not forbear, at Athens, to visit the walks and houses which the old philosophers had frequented or inhabited, and to collect the reverence which every nation, civil and barbarous, has paid to the ground where merit has been buried, I am afraid to declare against the general voice of mankind, and am inclined to believe, that this regard, which we involuntarily pay to the meanest relique of a man great and illustrious, is intended as an incitement to labour, and an encouragement to ex-

pect the same renown, if it be sought by the same virtues.

The virtuoso, therefore, cannot be said to be wholly useless; but perhaps he may be sometimes culpable for confining himself to business below his genius, and losing, in petty speculations, those hours by which, if he had spent them in nobler studies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world. It is not without grief, that I find a man capable of ratiocination or invention enlisting himself in this second class of learning; for when he has once discovered a method of gratifying his desire of eminence by exertion rather than by labour, and known the sweets of a life blest at once with the ease of idleness and the reputation of knowledge, he will not easily be brought to undergo again the toil of thinking, or leave his toys and trinkets for arguments and principles, arguments which require circumspection and vigilance, and principles which cannot be obtained but by the drudgery of meditation. He will gladly shut himself up for ever with his shells and medals, like the companions of Ulysses, who having tasted the fruit of Lotos, would not, even by the hope of seeing their own country, be tempted again to the dangers of the sea.

Ἄλλ' αὐτὸ βέλοντο μετ' ἀνδράσι Λωτοφάγοις,
Λωτὸν ἐρεπόμενοι μένμεν, νοστ' ἐτε λαθεσθαι.

—Who so tastes

Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts;

Nor other home nor other care intends,

But quits his house, his country, and his friends. *Per*

Collections of this kind are of use to the learned as heaps of stones and piles of timber are necessary to the architect. But to dig the quarry, or to search the field, requires not much of any quality, beyond stubborn perseverance; and though genius must often be unactive without this humble assistance, yet this can claim little praise, because every man can afford it.

To mean understandings, it is sufficient honour to be numbered amongst the lowest labourers of learning; but different abilities must find different tasks. To hew would have been unworthy of Palladio; and to ramble in search of shells and flowers, had but ill suited with the capacity of Newton.

LXXXIV. SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1751.

Cunarum fueras motor, Charideme, mearum,
Et pueri custos, affiduaſque comes.

Jam mihi nigrefcunt tonſa ſudaria barba,——

Sed tibi non crevi: te noſter villicus horret:

Te diſpenſator, te domus ipſa pavet.

Corripis, obſervas, quereris, ſuſpiria ducis,

Et vix a ſerulis abſtinet ira manum.

MART.

You rock'd my cradle, were my guide

In youth, ſtill tending at my ſide:

But now, dear Sir, my beard is grown,

Still I'm a child to thee alone.

Our ſteward, butler, cook, and all,

You fright; nay, e'en the very wall:

You pry, and frown, and growl, and chide,

And ſcarce will lay the rod aſide

F. LEWIS.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

YOU ſeem in all your papers to be an enemy to tyranny, and to look with impartiality upon the world: I ſhall therefore lay my caſe before you, and hope by your deciſion, to be ſet free from unreaſonable reſtraints, and enabled to juſtify myſelf againſt the accuſations which ſpite and pceviſhneſs produce againſt me.

At the age of five years I loſt my mother; and my father not being qualified to ſuperintend the education of a girl, committed me to the care of his ſiſter, who inſtructed

instructed me with the authority, and, not to deny what she may justly claim, with the affection of a parent. She had not very elevated sentiments or extensive views, but her principles were good, and her intentions pure; and though some may practise more virtue, scarce any commit fewer faults.

Under this good lady I learned all the common rules of decent behaviour, and standing maxims of domestic prudence; and might have grown up by degrees to country gentlewoman, without any thoughts of range beyond the neighbourhood, had not Flavia come down last summer, to visit her relations in the next village. I was taken, of course, to compliment the stranger; and was, at the first sight, surprized at the unconcern with which she saw herself gazed at by company whom she had never known before; at the carelessness with which she received compliments, and the readiness with which she returned them. I found she had something which I perceived myself to want, and could not but wish to be like her, at once easy and officious, attentive and unembarrassed. I went home, and for four days could think and talk of nothing but Miss Flavia; though my aunt told me, that she was a forward flirt, and thought herself wife before her time.

In a little time she repaid my visit, and raised in my heart a new confusion of love and admiration. I soon saw her again, and still found new charms in her conversation, and behaviour. You who have perhaps seen the world, may have observed, that formalities soon ceases between young persons. I know not how others are affected on such occasions, but I found myself irresistibly allured to friendship and intimacy, by the familiar complaisance and airy gaiety of Flavia; so that in a few weeks I became her favourite, and all the time was passed with me that she could gain from ceremony and visit.

As she came often to me, she necessarily spent some hours with my aunt, to whom she paid great respect by low courtesies, submissive compliance, and soft acquiescence; but as I became gradually more accustomed

her manners, I discovered that her civility was general; that there was a certain degree of deference shown by her to circumstances and appearances; that I went away flattered by her humility, whom she prized in her heart; that the influence of far the greatest part of those with whom she conversed ceased in their presence; and that sometimes she did not remember the names of them whom, without any intentional insincerity or false commendation, her habitual civility had sent away with very high thoughts of their importance.

It was not long before I perceived, that my aunt's opinion was not of much weight in Flavia's deliberations, and that she was looked upon by her as a woman of narrow sentiments, without knowledge of books, or observations on mankind. I had hitherto considered my aunt as entitled by her wisdom and experience to the highest reverence; and could not forbear to wonder that one so much younger should venture to suspect her error, or ignorance: but my surprise was without reason; and being now accustomed to think Flavia always in the right, I readily learned from her to trust my own reason, and to believe it possible, that they who lived longer might be mistaken.

Flavia had read much, and used so often to converse on subjects of learning, that she put all the men in the country to flight, except the old parson, who declared himself much delighted with her company, because she gave him opportunities to recollect the studies of his younger years; and by some mention of ancient story, made him rub the dust off his Homer, which had lain unregarded in his closet. With Homer, and a thousand other names familiar to Flavia, I had no acquaintance; but began, by comparing her accomplishments with my own, to repine at my education, and wish that I had not been so long confined to the company of those from whom nothing but housewifery was to be learned. I then set myself to peruse such books as Flavia recommended, and heard her opinion of their beauties and defects. I saw new worlds hourly bursting

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ing upon my mind, and was enraptured at the prospect of diversifying life with endless entertainment.

The old lady finding that a large screen, which she had undertaken to adorn with turkey-work against winter, made very slow advances, and that I had added two months but three leaves to a flowered apron that she had put in the frame, took the alarm, and with all the zeal of a mother-in-law, she next folly exclaimed against my new acquaintance, who had filled me with idle notions, and turned my head from books. But she had now lost her authority, for she began to find innumerable mistakes in her opinions, and improprieties in her language; and therefore thought of myself no longer bound to pay much regard to one who knew little beyond her needle and her dairy; and she professed to think that nothing more is required of a woman, than to see that the house is clean, and that her maids go to bed and rise at a certain hour.

She seemed, however to look upon Flavia as a rival in seducing me, and to imagine, that when her influence was withdrawn, I should return to my allegiance; but she was therefore contented herself with remote hints, and gentle admonitions, intermixed with sage histories of the miscarriages of wit, and disappointments of pride. But since she has found, that though Flavia is departed, I still persist in my new scheme, she has at length lost her patience, she snatches my book out of my hand, she tears my paper if she finds me writing, burns Flavia's letters before my face when she can seize them, and threatens to lock me up, and to complain to my father of my perverseness. 'If women,' she says, 'would be careful to acquaint themselves with family affairs, and many a penny might be saved; for while the mistress of the house is scribbling and reading, her servants are junketing, and linen is wearing out.' She then takes me round the rooms, shews me the work on the hangings, and chairs of tent-stitch, and asks whether all this was done with a pen and a book.

I cannot deny, that I sometimes laugh, and sometimes am fullen; but she has not delicacy enough to be

moved either with my mirth or my gloom, if
 did not think the interest of the family endangered
 by this change of my manners. She had for some years
 looked out young Mr. Surly, an heir in the neighbour-
 hood, remarkable for his love of fighting-cocks, as an
 advantageous match; and was extremely pleased with
 the civilities which he used to pay me, till under Fla-
 via's tuition I learned to talk of subjects which he could
 not understand. 'This,' she says, 'is the consequence
 of your female study; girls grow too wise to be advised,
 and too stubborn to be commanded:' but she is resolv-
 ed to try who shall govern, and will thwart my humour
 if she breaks my spirit.

These menaces, Mr. Rambler, sometimes make me
 angry; for I have been sixteen these ten weeks,
 and think myself exempted from the dominion of a go-
 verness, who has no pretensions to more sense or know-
 ledge than myself. I am resolved, since I am as tall
 and as wise as other women, to be no longer treated like
 a girl. Miss Flavia has often told me, that ladies of
 my age go to assemblies and routes, without their mo-
 thers and their aunts; I shall therefore, from this time,
 give no advice, and refuse to give accounts. I wish
 to know the time at which young ladies may
 begin to manage for themselves, which I am sure you cannot but
 think ought to begin before sixteen; if you are inclined
 to delay it longer, I shall have very little regard to your
 opinion.

My aunt often tells me of the advantages of expe-
 rience, and of the deference due to seniority; and both
 of these, and all the antiquated part of the world, talk
 of the unreserved obedience which they paid to
 the commands of their parents, and the undoubting
 confidence with which they listened to their pre-
 cepts; of the terrors which they felt at a frown, and
 the humility with which they supplicated forgive-
 ness whenever they had offended. I cannot but fancy
 that this boast is too general to be true, and that the
 young and the old were always at variance. I have,
 however,

however, told my aunt, that I will mend whatever will prove to be wrong; but she replies, that she reasons of her own, and that she is sorry to live in an age when girls have the impudence to ask for proofs.

I beg once again, Mr. Rambler, to know whether I am not as wise as my aunt; and whether, when I presume to check me as a baby, I may not pluck up spirit, and return her insolence. I shall not proceed to extremities without your advice, which is therefore impatiently expected by

MYRTILLA

P. S. Remember I am past sixteen.

No. LXXXV. TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1750

Otia si tollas periere Cupidinis arcus
Comtemptæque jacent, et sine luce faces.

OVID.

At busy hearts in vain love's arrows fly;
Dim, scorn'd, and impotent, his torches lie.

MANY writers of eminence in physick have laid out their diligence upon the consideration of the distempers to which men are exposed by particular parts of life; and very learned treatises have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the sea, and the mine. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accustomed to anatomical enquires, and medical refinements, would not find reasons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him, that almost every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and safer than a life of sloth.

The necessity of action is not only demonstrable from the fabrick of the body, but evident from observation of the universal practice of mankind; who for the preservation of health in those whose rank or wealth exempt them from the necessity of lucrative labour, have invented sports and diversions, though not of equal use

the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to those that practice them, and differing only from the idleness of the husbandman or manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful sense of compulsion. The huntsman rises early, pursues his game through all the dangers and obstructions of the chase, swims rivers, and scales precipices, when he returns home no less harassed than the soldier, and has perhaps sometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or death: yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither subject to the command of a general, nor incurs any penalties for neglect and disobedience; he has neither profit or honour to expect from his perils and conquests, but toils without the hope of mural or trick garlands, and must content himself with the praise of his tenants and companions.

But such is the constitution of man, that labour may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite, if it be considered how much happiness is gained, and how much misery escaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the utmost that can be hoped from a sedentary and unactive habit; ease, a neutral state between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigour, the readiness of enterprize, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at stand. Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain; and whatever hope the dreams of speculation may suggest of observing the proportion between nutriment and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy state by supplies exactly equal to its waste, we know that, in effect, the vital powers, unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid; that as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away

slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though the
sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless
chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with
the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which
we are decreed; but while the soul and body continue
united, it can make the association pleasing, and give
probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy
separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that
acute diseases are from heaven, and chronical from our
selves: the dart of death indeed falls from heaven, but
we poison it by our own misconduct; to die is the fate
of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally
his folly.

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present
state is capable, that the mind and body should both be
kept in action; that neither the faculties of the one nor
of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of
use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary sub-
mission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the ex-
pence of that health which must enable it either to
give pleasure to its possessor, or assistance to others. It
is too frequently the pride of students to despise the
amusements and recreations which give to the rest of
mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart.
Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent
with such skill in common exercises or sports as is neces-
sary to make them practised with delight; and no man
is willing to do that of which the necessity is not pre-
sant and immediate, when he knows that his awkward-
ness must make him ridiculous.

*Ludere qui nescit, canpestribus alsinet armis,
Indoctrinque Pilæ. Discite, Trochive quiescit,
Ne spissæ risum tellant impune Cereæ.*

He that's unskilful will not toss a ball,
Nor run, nor wrestle, for he fears the fall;
He justly fears to meet deserv'd disgrace,
And that the ring will hiss the baffled ass.

CREE

Th

Thus the man of learning is often resigned, almost by his own consent, to languor and pain; and while in the prosecution of his studies he suffers the weariness of labour, is subject by his course of life to the maladies of idleness. It was, perhaps, from the observation of this mischievous omission in those who are employed about intellectual objects, that Locke has, in his System of Education, urged the necessity of a trade to men of all ranks and professions; that when the mind is weary with its proper task, it may be relaxed by a slighter attention to some mechanical operation; and that while the vital functions are resuscitated and awakened by vigorous motion, the understanding may be restrained from that extravagance and dissipation by which it relieves itself after long intenseness of thought, unless some allurements be presented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is so little reason for expecting frequent conformity to Locke's precept, that it is not necessary to enquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occasion to petty emulation, and degenerate ambition; and whether, if our divines and physicians were taught the lathe and the chizze, they would not think more of their tools than their books; as Nero neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too much pleased with little things: but what is there which may not be perverted? Let us remember how much worse employment might have been found for those hours which a manual occupation appears to engross; let us compute the profit with the loss; and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his studies, consider likewise, that perhaps by the same attractions he is sometimes withheld from debauchery, or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from lust.

I have always admired the wisdom of those by whom our female education was instituted; for having contrived, that every woman, of whatever condition, should be taught some arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of reclusive and domestick leisure may be filled up.

These arts are more necessary as the weakness of the sex and the general system of life debar ladies from many employments which, by diversifying the circumstances of men, preserve them from being cankered by the rust of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happiness of the world may be the consequence of this judicious regulation. Perhaps the most powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confusion and slaughter that would be produced by so many piercing eyes and vivid understandings, turned loose at once upon mankind, with no other business than to sparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to destroy.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary skill in plain-work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governesses, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous ensharers of the soul, by enabling themselves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and with idleness her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows, and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that Love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed; and Hector, in the Iliad, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terrors, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff.

It is certain that any wild wish or vain imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind, as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetic principle, that *Nature abhors a vacuum*, may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however absurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of those desires that disturb his life and contaminate his conscience, from some unhappy hour when too much leisure exposed him to their incursions; for he has lived with little observation either

himself or others, who does not know that to be is to be vicious.

LXXXVI. SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1751.

Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus & aure. HOR.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers scan. ELPHINSTON.

ONE of the ancients has observed, that the burthen of government is encreased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that excellence is consecrated by death; when envy and interest cease to act against it; and those passions by which it was at first vilified and opposed, now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He that succeeds a celebrated writer, has the same difficulties to encounter; he stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object.

One of the old poets congratulates himself that he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten path, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessor, the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied, with contempt, that he had heard the nightingale herself;

self; and the same treatment must every man expect whose praise is that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections I am about to offer to my reader some observations upon *Paradise Lost*; and hope that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to the common wealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errors to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter orb arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this poem under most of the general topicks of criticism, has barely touched upon the versification; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with how minute attention the ancient critics considered the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which were most barren of ideas, and required labour, rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet. Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require, he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody; and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds, and more affected by the same words in one order than

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another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal, but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the versification of Milton, I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall therefore industriously decline the dialect of grammarians; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented but because the language already in use was insufficient. If therefore I shall sometimes seem obscure, may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroick measure of the English language may be properly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line.

Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
But who can bear th' approach of certain fate? DRYDEN.

Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd. MILTON.

The accent may be observed, in the second line of Dryden, and the second and fourth of Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussion at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should therefore be exactly kept in disjuncts, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But, to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual

perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has therefore enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed; this, though always injures the harmony of the line considered in itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound, and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances; and Milton seldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the musick.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe;
And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent! and thou the day,
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
For us too large; where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncrop'd falls to the ground;
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In this passage it will be at first observed, that all the lines are not equally harmonious, and upon a near examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the rest are more or less licentious with respect to the accent. In some the accent is equally upon two syllables together, and in both strong
As—

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, *both stood,*
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n.

others the accent is equally upon two syllables, but on both weak.

a race

To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness *infinite*, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

the first pair of syllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactness, without any unpleasing diminution of harmony, as may be observed in the examples already cited, and more remarkably in this—

Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker omnipotent! and thou the day.

But, excepting the first pair of syllables, which may be considered as arbitrary, a poet who, not having the convention or knowledge of Milton, has more need to secure his audience by musical cadences, should seldom suffer more than one aberration from the rule in any single verse.

There are two lines in this passage more remarkably unharmonious :

This delicious place,
For us too large ; *where thy* abundance wants
Partakers, and uncrop'd *falls to* the ground.

where the third pair of syllables in the first, and fourth pair in the second verse, have their accents retrograde or inverted ; the first syllable being strong or acute, and the second weak. The detriment which the measure suffers by this inversion of the accents is sometimes less perceptible, when the verses are carried one into another, but is remarkably striking in this place, where the vicious verse concludes a period ; and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every single line. This will appear by reading a couplet, in which Cowley, an author not sufficiently

ciently studious of harmony, has committed the fault :

————— his harmless life
Does with substantial blessedness abound,
And the soft wings of peace cover him round.

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as Milton expresses in his sonnet, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse, the Iambick, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroic measure is divided, and the Trochaick, consisting in the like alternation of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance; nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of Milton.

LXXXVII. TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1751.

Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,
 Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,
 Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem. HOR.

The slave to envy, anger, wine, or love,
 The wretch of sloth, it's excellence shall prove;
 Fierceness itself shall hear it's rage away,
 When list'ning calmy to th' instructive lay. FRANCIS.

THAT few things are so liberally bestowed, or squandered with so little effect, as good advice, has been generally observed; and many sage positions have been advanced concerning the reasons of this complaint, and the means of removing it. It is indeed an important and noble enquiry, for little would be wanting to the happiness of life, if every man could conform to the precept as soon as he was shown it.

This perverse neglect of the most salutary precepts, and stubborn resistance of the most pathetick persuasion, is usually imputed to him by whom the counsel is received; and we often hear it mentioned as a sign of a deep depravity, that though good advice was given, it has wrought no reformation.

Others, who imagine themselves to have quicker capacity and deeper penetration, have found out, that the inefficacy of advice is usually the fault of the counsellor, and rules have been laid down, by which this important duty may be successfully performed: we are directed by what tokens to discover the favourable moment at which the heart is disposed for the operation of truth and reason, with what address to administer, and with what vehicles to disguise the catharticks of the soul.

But notwithstanding this specious expedient, we find the world yet in the same state; advice is still given, but still received with disgust; nor has it appeared that the bitterness of the medicine has been yet abated,

or it's power increased, by any methods of preparing it.

If we consider the manner in which those who assume the office of directing the conduct of others execute their undertaking, it will not be very wonderful that their labours, however zealous or affectionate, are frequently useless. For what is the advice that is commonly given? A few general maxims, enforced with vehemence and inculcated with importunity, failing for want of particular reference and immediate application.

It is not often that any man can have so much knowledge of another, as is necessary to make instruction useful. We are sometimes not ourselves conscious of the original motives of our actions, and when we know them, our first care is to hide them from the sight of others, and often from those most diligently, who by their superiority either of power or understanding may invite them to inspect our lives; it is therefore very probable that he who endeavours the cure of our intellectual maladies, mistakes their cause; and that his prescriptions avail nothing, because he knows not which of the passions or desires is vitiated.

Advice, as it always gives a temporary appearance of superiority, can never be very grateful, even when it is most necessary or most judicious. But for the same reason every one is eager to instruct his neighbour. To be wise or to be virtuous, is to buy dignity and importance at a high price; but when nothing is necessary to elevation but detection of the follies or the faults of others, no man is so insensible to the voice of fame as to linger on the ground.

—*Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
Tellere humo, visorque vitium vitare per ora.*

New ways I must attempt, my groveling name
To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame.

DAYTON

Vanity is so frequently the apparent motive of advice

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that we, for the most part, summon our powers to oppose it, without any very accurate enquiry whether it is right. It is sufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes at our expence, and assumes authority over us without our permission; for many would contentedly suffer the consequences of their own mistakes, rather than the insolence of him who triumphs as their adviser.

It is, indeed, seldom found that any advantages are enjoyed with that moderation which the uncertainty of human good so powerfully enforces; and therefore the adviser may justly suspect, that he has inflamed the passion which he laments by arrogance and superciliousness. He may suspect, but needs not hastily to condemn himself, for he can rarely be certain that the softest language, or the most humble diffidence, would have escaped resentment; since scarcely any degree of circumpection can prevent or obviate the rage with which the slothful, the impotent, and the unsuccessful, vent their discontent upon those that excel them. Modesty itself, if it is praised, will be envied; and there is a mind so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompence is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain.

The number of those whom the love of themselves has thus far corrupted, is perhaps not great; but there are few so free from vanity, as not to dictate to those who will hear their instructions, with a visible sense of their own beneficence; and few to whom it is not unpleasing to receive documents, however tenderly and cautiously delivered, or who are not willing to raise themselves from pupillage, by disputing the propositions of their teacher.

It was the maxim, I think, of Alphonfus of Arragon, that *dead counsellors are safest*. The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive; because they are heard with patience and with reverence.

rence. We are not unwilling to believe that man is wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition; and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition, which occur in oral conferences, are avoided. An author cannot obtrude his advice unasked, nor can he be often suspected of any malignant intention to impose his readers with his knowledge or his wit. Yet so prevalent is the habit of comparing ourselves with others, while they remain within the reach of our passion, that books are seldom read with complete impartiality; but by those from whom the writer is placed at such a distance that his life or death is indifferent.

We see that volumes may be perused, and perused with attention, to little effect; and that maxims of prudence, or principles of virtue, may be treasured in the memory without influencing the conduct. Of the numbers that pass their lives among books, very few read to be made wiser or better, apply any general proof of vice to themselves, or try their own manners by axioms of justice. They purpose either to consume those hours for which they can find no other amusement, to gain or preserve that respect which learning has always obtained; or to gratify their curiosity with knowledge, which, like treasures buried and forgotten, is of no use to others or themselves.

‘The preacher,’ says a French author, ‘may spend an hour in explaining and enforcing a precept of religion, without feeling any impression from his own performance, because he may have no further design than to fill up his hour.’ A student may easily exhaust his life in comparing divines and moralists, without any practical regard to morality or religion; he may be learning, not to live, but to reason; he may regard only the elegance of style, justness of argument, and accuracy of method; and may enable himself to criticise with judgment, and dispute with subtilty, while

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chief use of his volumes is unthought of, his mind unaffected, and his life is unreformed.

But though truth and virtue are thus frequently deserted by pride, obstinacy, or folly, we are not allowed to desert them; for whoever can furnish arms which hitherto have not employed, may enable them to conquer some hearts which would have resisted any other method of attack. Every man of genius has some arts of fixing the attention peculiar to himself, by which, most effectually exerted, he may benefit mankind; for the arguments for purity of life fail of their due influence, because they have been considered and confuted, but because they have been passed over without consideration. To the position of Tully, that if Virtue could be loved, she must be loved, may be added, that if Truth could be heard, she must be obeyed.

LXXXVIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1751.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti:
Audebit quæcunque minus splendoris habebunt,
Aut sine pondere erunt, & honore indigna ferentur,
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedant,
Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia vestæ.

HOR.

But he that hath a curious piece design'd,
When he begins, must take a censor's mind,
Severe and honest; and what words appear
Too light and trivial, or too weak to bear
The weighty sense, nor worth the reader's care,
Shake off; tho' stubborn, they are loth to move,
And tho' we fancy, dearly tho' we love.

CREECH.

THERE is no reputation for genius,' says Quintilian, 'to be gained by writing on things which, however necessary, have little splendor or shew. The height of a building attracts the eye, but the foundations lie without regard. Yet since there is not any way to the top of science, but from the lowest parts,

' I shall think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, which he that wants cannot be an orator.'

Confirmed and animated by this illustrious precedent I shall continue my enquiries into Milton's art of versification. Since, however minute the employment may appear, of analysing lines into syllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a solemn deliberation upon accents and pauses, it is certain that without the petty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to facility; that shackles attention, and governs passions.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall in it's proper place, but that the syllables themselves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into another. This is to be effected by a proportionable mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined, and, by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because monosyllables being of Teutonic original, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as—

— Every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficient

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ly conceived by attending to the following passages :

Immortal Amarant—there grows
And flow'rs aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of Heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
With these that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreatb'd with beams.

The same comparison that I propose to be made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage, may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations :

Under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Braider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

Here in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve first deck'd her nuptial bed;
And heav'nly choirs the hymenean sung.

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed, not only to the music of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in use, but to the softness of the Italian, the most mellifluous of all modern poetry, seems fully convinced of the unsuitableness of our language for smooth versification, and is therefore pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance; for this reason, and I believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add but little musick to his poem.

—The richer feat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city Gerion's sons
Call El Dorado.——

The moon—The Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesole
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands.—

He has indeed been more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have handled less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of Milton's versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As—

Knowledge—
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

This licence, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages, ancient and modern; and therefore the criticks on *Paradise Lost* have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for continuing it. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the alexandrine of the French; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e* which our ancestors added to most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants, and it is more necessary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is
rugged.

gedness and asperity, and has left our harsh cadences harsher. But his elisions are not all equally to be excused; in some syllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few may be safely imitated. The abscission of a vowel is undoubtedly vicious when it is strongly sounded, and makes, with it's associate consonant, a harsh and audible syllable.

——What he gives,
Spiritual, may to purest spirits be found,
No ingrateful food, and food alike these pure
Intellectual substances require.

Fruits—Hesperian fables true,
If true, here *only*, and of delicious taste.

——Evening now approach'd,
For we have *also* our evening and our morn.

Of guests he makes them slaves,
Inhospitably, and kills their infant males.

And vital *Virtue* infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass.——

God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him.

I believe every reader will agree that in all those passages, though not equally in all, the musick is injured, and in some the meaning obscured. There are other instances in which the vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronounced in common speech, that the loss of it in poetry is scarcely perceived; and therefore such compliance with the measure may be allowed.

Nature breeds
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable; and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd——

——From the shore
They view'd the vast *immensurable* abyss.

Impe-

Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire.

To none communicable in earth or heaven.

Yet even these contractions encrease the roughness of a language too rough already; and though in his poems they may be sometimes suffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uses in his poems the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables.

—Thus it shall befall

Him who to worth in woman over-trusting
Lets her will rule.

I also err'd in over-much admiring.

Verses of this kind occur almost in every page; but though they are not unpleasing or dissonant, they ought not to be admitted into heroick poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epic and tragick measures, than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of the dramatick lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

No. LXXXIX. TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1751

Dulce est desipere in loco.

HOR.

Wisdom at proper times is well forgot.

LOCKE, whom there is no reason to suspect of being a favourer of idleness or libertinism, has advanced that whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigour, must allow some of it to pass in trifles. It is beyond the powers of humanity to spend his whole life in profound study and intense meditation, and the most rigorous exacters of industry and seriousness have appointed hours for relaxation and amusement.

It is certain, that, with or without our consent, any of the few moments allotted us will slide imperceptibly away, and that the mind will break from confinement to it's stated task, into sudden excursions. Severe and connected attention is preserved but for a short time; and when a man shuts himself up in his closet, and bends his thoughts to the discussion of any intricate question, he will find his faculties continually wandering away to more pleasing entertainments. He then perceives himself transported, he knows not how, to distant tracts of thought; and return to his first object as from a dream, without knowing when he forgot it, or how long he has been abstracted from it.

It has been observed, that the most studious are not always the most learned. There is, indeed, no great difficulty in discovering that this difference of proficiency may arise from the difference of intellectual powers, or the choice of books, or the convenience of information. But I believe it likewise frequently happens, that the most reclusive are not the most vigorous proficients of study. Many impose upon the world, and many upon themselves, by an appearance of severe, and exemplary diligence; when they, in reality, give themselves up to the luxury of fancy, please their minds with regulating the past, or planning out the future; place themselves at will in varied situations of happiness, and slumber away their days in voluntary visions. In the journey of life some are left behind, because they are naturally feeble and slow; some because they miss the way; and many because they leave it by choice, and instead of pressing onward with a steady pace, delight themselves with momentary deviations, turn aside to pluck every flower, and repose in every shade.

There is nothing more fatal to a man whose business is to think, than to have learned the art of regulating his mind with those airy gratifications. Other vices or follies are restrained by fear, reformed by admonition, or rejected by the conviction which the comparison of our conduct with that of others may in time produce

produce. But this invisible riot of the mind, this secret prodigality of being, is secure from detection, and fearless of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartments, shuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himself to his own fancy; new worlds rise up before him, one image is followed by another, and a long succession of delights dances round him. He is at last called back to life by nature, or custom, and enters peevish into society, because he cannot model it to his own will. He returns from his idle excursions with the asperity, though not with the knowledge, of a student, and hastens again to the same felicity with the eagerness of a man bent upon the advancement of some favourite science. The infatuation strengthens by degrees, and, like the poison of opiate, weakens his powers, without any external symptom of malignity.

It happens, indeed, that these hypocrites of learning are in time detected, and convinced by disgrace and disappointment of the difference between the labour of thought, and the sport of musing. But this discovery is often not made till it is too late to recover the time that has been fooled away. A thousand accidents may, indeed, awaken drones to a more early sense of their danger and their shame. But they who are convinced of the necessity of breaking from this habitual drowsiness, too often relapse in spite of their resolution; for these ideal seducers are always near, and neither any particularity of time nor place is necessary to their influence; they invade the soul without warning, and have often charmed down resistance before their approach is perceived or suspected.

This captivity, however, it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful, to pass his life with the esteem of others, or to look back with satisfaction from his old age upon his earlier years. In order to regain liberty, he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the Stoick precept, teach his desires to fix upon external things; he must adopt the joys and the pains

others, and excite in his mind the want of social
asures and amicable communication.

It is, perhaps, not impossible to promote the cure of
mental malady, by close application to some new
which may pour in fresh ideas, and keep curio-
in perpetual motion. But study requires solitude,
solitude is a state dangerous to those who are too
accustomed to sink into themselves. Active em-
ment, or public pleasure, is generally a necessary
of this intellectual regimen, without which, though
remission may be obtained, a complete cure will
easily be effected.

This is a formidable and obstinate disease of the in-
tellect, of which, when it has once become radicated
time, the remedy is one of the hardest tasks of rea-
son and of virtue. It's slightest attacks, therefore,
should be watchfully opposed; and he that finds the
acid and narcotick infection beginning to seize him,
should turn his whole attention against it, and check it
at the first discovery by proper counteraction.

The great resolution to be formed, when happiness
and virtue are thus formidably invaded, is, that no
part of life be spent in a state of neutrality or indif-
ference; but that some pleasure be found for every mo-
ment that is not devoted to labour; and that, when-
ever the necessary business of life grows irksome or dis-
tressing, an immediate transition be made to diversion
and gaiety.

After the exercises which the health of the body re-
quires, and which have themselves a natural tendency
to enliven and invigorate the mind, the most eligible
employment of a rational being seems to be that inter-
change of thoughts which is practised in free and easy
conversation; where suspicion is banished by experi-
ence, and emulation by benevolence; where every man
speaks with no other restraint than unwillingness to
be misunderstood, and hears with no other disposition than desire
to be pleased.

There must be a time in which every man trifles;
and the only choice that nature offers us, is, to trifle in
company

company or alone. To join profit with pleasure, has been an old precept among men who have had very different conceptions of profit. All have agreed that amusements should not terminate wholly in the present moment, but contribute more or less to future advantage. He that amuses himself among well chosen companions, can scarcely fail to receive, from the careless and obstreperous merriment which virtue allows, some useful hints; nor can converse on the most familiar topics, without some casual information. The loose sparkles of thoughtless wit may give no light to the mind, and the gay contention for paradoxical positions rectify the opinions.

This is the time in which those friendships that give happiness or consolation, relief or security, are generally formed. A wise and good man is never so amiable as in his unbended and familiar intervals. Heroic generosity, or philosophical discoveries, may command veneration and respect, but love always implies some kind of natural or voluntary equality, and is only too excited by that levity and cheerfulness which disengages all minds from awe and solicitude, invites the modest to freedom, and, exalts the timorous to confidence. This easy gaiety is certain to please, whatever be the character of him that exerts it, if our superiors descend from their elevation, we love them for lessening the distance at which we are placed below them; and inferiors, from whom we can receive no lasting advantage, will always keep our affections while their sprightliness and mirth contribute to our pleasure.

Every man finds himself differently affected by the sight of fortresses of war and palaces of pleasure; we look on the height and strength of the bulwarks with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, for we cannot think of defence without admitting images of danger; but we range delighted and jocund through the gay apartments of the palace, because nothing is impressed by them on the mind but joy and festivity. Such is the difference between great and amiable characters; with protectors we are safe, with companions we are happy.

No. XC. SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 1751.

In tenui labor. VIRG.

What toil in slender things!

It is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to please or instruct. Too much nicety of detail disgusts the greatest part of readers, and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads, and lay down rules of extensive comprehension, are common understandings of little use. They who undertake these subjects are therefore always in danger, and one or other inconvenience arises to their imagination, either fighting us with rugged science, or amusing us with empty sound.

In criticising the work of Milton, there is indeed opportunity to intersperse passages that can hardly fail to relieve the languors of attention; and since, in examining the variety and choice of the pauses with which he has diversified his numbers, it will be necessary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found; perhaps the remarks may be well compensated by the examples, and the tediousness of grammatical disquisitions somewhat alleviated.

Milton formed his scheme of versification by the poets of Greece and Rome, whom he proposed to himself for his models, so far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit the imitation. There are indeed many inconveniencies inseparable from our heroic measure compared with that of Homer and Virgil; inconveniencies, which it is no reproach to Milton not to have overcome, because they are in their own nature insuperable; but against which he has struggled with so much art and diligence, that he may at least be said to have deserved success.

The hexameter of the ancients may be considered as consisting of fifteen syllables, so melodiously disposed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleasing and sonorous lyric measures are

formed from the fragments of the heroic. It is, indeed, scarcely possible to break them in such a manner but that *invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ*, some harmony will still remain, and the due proportions of sound will always be discovered. This measure therefore allowed great variety of pauses, and great liberties of connecting one verse with another, because wherever the line was interrupted, either part singly was musical. But the ancients seem to have confined this privilege to hexameters; in their other measures, though longer than the English heroic, those who wrote after the refinements of versification, venture so seldom to change their pauses, that every variation may be supposed rather a compliance with necessity than the choice of judgment.

Milton was constrained within the narrow limits of measure not very harmonious in the utmost perfection; the single parts, therefore, into which it was to be sometimes broken by pauses, were in danger of losing the very form of verse. This has, perhaps, notwithstanding all his care, sometimes happened.

As harmony is the end of poetical measures, no part of a verse ought to be so separated from the rest as not to remain still more harmonious than prose, or to shew, by the disposition of the tones, that it is part of a verse. This rule in the old hexameter might be easily observed, but in English will very frequently be in danger of violation; for the order and regularity of accents cannot well be perceived in a succession of fewer than three syllables, which will confine the English poet to only one pause; it being supposed that, when he connects one line with another, he should never make a full pause at less distance than that of three syllables from the beginning or end of a verse.

That this rule should be universally and indispensably established, perhaps cannot be granted; something may be allowed to variety, and something to the adaptation of the numbers to the subject; but it will be found generally necessary, and the ear will seldom fail to suffer by its neglect.

Thus when a single syllable is cut off from the rest,

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either be united to the line with which the sense connects it, or be founded alone. If it be united to the other line, it corrupts its harmony; if disjoined, it must stand alone, and with regard to music be superfluous; there is no harmony in a single sound, because it has no proportion to another.

Hypocrites austere talk,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure; and commands to some, leaves free to all.

When two syllables likewise are absconded from the rest, they evidently want some associate sounds to make them harmonious.

—Eyes—

—more wakeful than to drouze,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the pass'ral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. *Meanwhile*
To re-salute the world with sacred light
Leucothea wak'd.

He ended, and the sun gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch'd; he *blew*
His trumpet.

First in the east his glorious lamp was seen,
Regent of day; and all th' horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through heav'n's high road: *the gray*
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danc'd,
Shedding sweet influence.

The same defect is perceived in the following line, where the pause is at the second syllable from the beginning:

The race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores.

When the pause falls upon the third syllable or the seventh, the harmony is better preserved; but as the third and seventh are weak syllables, the period leaves the ear unsatisfied, and in expectation of the remaining part of the verse:

He, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulph,
Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
Reterv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him.

God,—with frequent intercourse,
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending.

It may be, I think, established as a rule, that a pause which concludes a period should be made for the most part upon a strong syllable, as the fourth and sixth; but those pauses which only suspend the sense may be placed upon the weaker. Thus the rest in the third line of the first passage satisfies the ear better than in the fourth; and the close of the second quotation better than of the third.

The evil soon
Drawn back, redounded (as a flood) on those
From whom it sprung; impossible to mix
With blessedness.

— What we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to wild.

The paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us.

The rest in the fifth place has the same inconvenience as in the seventh and third, that the syllable is weak.

Beast

Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
 And fish with fish, to graze the herb all leaving,
 Devour'd each *other*; nor stood much in awe
 Of man, but fled *him*, or with countenance grim,
 Glar'd on him passing.

The noblest and most majestic pauses which our versification admits, are upon the fourth and sixth syllables; which are both strongly founded in a pure and regular sense, and at either of which the line is so divided, that both members participate of harmony:

But now at last the sacred influence
 Of light *appears*, and from the walls of heav'n
 Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
 A glimmering *dawn*; here nature first begins
 Her farthest verge, and chaos to retire.

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the rest upon the sixth syllable, which taking in a complete compass of sound, such as is sufficient to constitute one of our lyric measures, makes a full and solemn close. Some passages which conclude at this stop, I could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration.

Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
 Thou with th' eternal wisdom didst converse,
 Wisdom thy sister; and with her didst play
 In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleas'd
 With thy celestial song.

Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
 Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there,
 He staid not to inquire.

He blew
 His trumpet, heard in *Oreb* since, perhaps
 When God descended; and, perhaps, once more
 To sound at general doom.

If the poetry of Milton be examined, with regard to the pauses and flow of his verses into each other, it will appear that he has performed all that our language would admit; and the comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing will show that he excelled as much in the lower as in the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning.

No. XCI. TUESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1751.

*Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit* HOR.

To court the great ones, and to sooth their pride,
Seems a sweet task to those that never try'd;
But those that have, know well that danger's near.

CREECH.

THE Sciences having long seen their votaries labouring for the benefit of mankind without reward, put up their petition to Jupiter for a more equitable distribution of riches and honours. Jupiter was moved at their complaints, and touched with the approaching miseries of men; whom the Sciences, wearied with perpetual ingratitude, were now threatening to forsake; and who would have been reduced by their departure to feed in dens upon the mast of trees, to hunt their prey in deserts, and to perish under the paws of animals stronger and fiercer than themselves.

A synod of the celestials was therefore convened, in which it was resolved that Patronage should descend to the assistance of the Sciences. Patronage was the daughter of Astræa, by a mortal father, and had been educated in the school of Truth, by the goddesses whom she was now appointed to protect. She had from her mother that dignity of aspect which struck terror into false merit; and from her mistress that reserve which made her

only

only accessible to those whom the Sciences brought into her presence.

She came down, with the general acclamation of all the powers that favour learning. Hope danced before her, and Liberality stood at her side, ready to scatter by her direction the gifts which Fortune, who followed her, was commanded to supply. As she advanced towards Parnassus, the cloud which had long hung over it, was immediately dispelled. The shades, before withered with drought, spread their original verdure, and the flowers that had languished with chilness brightened their colours, and invigorated their scents; the Muses tuned their harps and exerted their voices; and all the concert of nature welcomed her arrival.

On Parnassus she fixed her residence, in a palace raised by the Sciences, and adorned with whatever could delight the eye, elevate the imagination, or enlarge the understanding. Here she dispersed the gifts of Fortune with the impartiality of Justice, and the discernment of Truth. Her gate stood always open, and Hope sat at the portal, inviting to entrance all whom the Sciences numbered in their train. The court was therefore thronged with innumerable multitudes, of whom, though many returned disappointed, seldom any had confidence to complain; for Patronage was known to neglect few, but for want of the due claims to her regard. Those, therefore, who had solicited her favour without success, generally withdrew from public notice; and either diverted their attention to meaner employments, or endeavoured to supply their deficiencies by closer application.

In time, however, the number of those who had miscarried in their pretensions grew so great, that they became less ashamed of their repulses; and instead of hiding their disgrace in retirement, began to besiege the gates of the palace, and obstruct the entrance of such as they thought likely to be more caressed. The decisions of Patronage, who was but half a goddess, had been sometimes erroneous; and though she always made haste to rectify her mistakes, a few instances of her fallibility encouraged every one to appeal from her judgment to his own

own and that of his companions, who are always ready to clamour in the common cause, and elate each other with reciprocal applause.

Hope was a steady friend to the disappointed, and Impudence incited them to accept a second invitation, and lay their claim again before Patronage. They were again, for the most part, sent back with ignominy, but found Hope not alienated, and Impudence more resolutely zealous, they therefore contrived new expedients and hoped at last to prevail by their multitudes which were always increasing, and their perseverance which Hope and Impudence forbade them to relax.

Patronage having been long a stranger to the heavenly assemblies, began to degenerate towards terrestrial nature, and forget the precepts of Justice and Truth. Instead of confining her friendship to the Sciences, she preferred herself, by little and little, to contract an acquaintance with Pride, the son of Falschood, by whose embraces she had two daughters, Flattery and Caprice. Flattery was nursed by Liberality, and Caprice by Fortune, without any assistance from the lessons of the Sciences.

Patronage began openly to adopt the sentiments and imitate the manners of her husband, by whose opinion she now directed her decisions with very little heed to the precepts of Truth; and as her daughters continually gained upon her affections, the Sciences lost their influence, till none found much reason to boast of their reception, but those whom Caprice or Flattery conducted to her throne.

The throngs who had so long waited, and so often been dismissed for want of recommendation from the Sciences, were delighted to see the power of those rigorous goddesses tending to its extinction. Their patronesses now renewed their encouragements. Hope smiled at the approach of Caprice, and Impudence was always at hand to introduce her clients to Flattery.

Patronage had now learned to procure herself reverence by ceremonies and formalities, and instead of admitting her petitioners to an immediate audience, ordered

the antechamber to be erected, called among mortals, the *Hall of Expectation*. Into this hall the entrance was only to those whom Impudence had consigned to Flattery; and it was therefore crowded with a promiscuous throng, assembled from every corner of the earth, pressing forward with the utmost eagerness of desire, and agitated with all the anxieties of competition.

They entered this general receptacle with ardour and activity, and made no doubt of speedy access, under the conduct of Flattery, to the presence of Patronage. But generally happened that they were here left to their destiny, for the inner doors were committed to Caprice, who opened and shut them, as it seemed, by chance, and selected or admitted without any settled rule of distinction. In the mean time, the miserable attendants were left to wear out their lives in alternate exultation and dejection, delivered up to the sport of suspicion, who was always whispering into their ear designs against them which were never formed, and of Envy, who diligently pointed out the good fortune of one or other of their competitors. Infamy flew round the hall, and scattered mildews from her wings, with which every one was stained; Reputation followed her with slower flight, and endeavoured to hide the blemishes with paint, which was immediately washed away, or separated of itself, and left the stains more visible; nor were the spots of Infamy ever effaced, but with limped water effused by the hand of Time from a well which sprung up beneath the throne of Truth.

It frequently happened that Science, unwilling to lose the ancient prerogative of recommending to Patronage, could lead her followers into the *Hall of Expectation*; but they were soon discouraged from attending; for not only Envy and Suspicion incessantly tormented them, but Impudence considered them as intruders, and incited Infamy to blacken them. They therefore quickly retreated, but seldom without some spots which they could scarcely wash away, and which shewed that they had once stood in the *Hall of Expectation*.

The rest continued to expect the happy moment, at which

which Caprice should beckon them to approach; and endeavoured to propitiate her, not with Homeric hymn, the representation of great actions, or the recital of noble sentiments, but with soft and voluptuous melody, intermingled with the praises of Patronage and Pride, by whom they were heard at once with pleasure and contempt.

Some were indeed admitted by Caprice, when the least expected it, and heaped by Patronage with the gifts of Fortune; but they were from that time chained to her foot-stool, and condemned to regulate their lives by her glances and her nods; they seemed proud of their manacles, and seldom complained of any drudgery, however servile, or any affront, however contemptuous; yet they were often, notwithstanding their obedience, seized of a sudden by Caprice, divested of their ornaments, and thrust back into the *Hall of Expectation*.

Here they mingled again with the tumult, and all, except a few whom experience had taught to seek happiness in the regions of liberty, continued to spend hours, and days, and years courting the smile of Caprice by the arts of Flattery; till at length new crowds pressed in upon them and drove them forth at different outlets into the inhabitants of Disease and Shame, and Poverty, and Despair, where they passed the rest of their lives in narratives of promises and breaches of faith, of joys and sorrows, of hopes and disappointments.

The Sciences, after a thousand indignities, retired from the palace of Patronage, and having long wandered over the world in grief and distress, were led at last to the cottage of Independence, the daughter of Fortitude, where they were taught by Prudence and Parsimony to support themselves in dignity and quiet.

No. XC

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No. XCII

No. XCII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1751.

Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum
 Perstringis aures, jam litui strepent.

HOR.

Lo! now the clarion's voice I hear,
 Its threat'ning murmurs pierce mine ear;
 And in thy lines with brazen breath
 The trumpet sounds the charge of death. FRANCIS.

It has been long observed, that the idea of beauty is vague and undetined, different in different minds, and diversified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto used to signify that which pleases us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can justify ourselves only by the concurrence of numbers, without such power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument but example and authority. It is, indeed, to the subject to the examinations of reason, that Pascal opposes it to end where demonstration begins; and maintains, that without incongruity and absurdity we cannot speak of *geometrical beauty*.

To trace all the sources of that various pleasure which we ascribe to the agency of beauty, or to disentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would, perhaps, require a very great part of the life of Aristotle or Plato. It is, however, in many cases, apparent that this quality is merely relative and comparative; that we pronounce things beautiful, because they have something which we agree, for whatever reason, to call beauty, in a greater degree than we have been accustomed to find it in other things of the same kind; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge increases, and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind; and therefore Boileau justly remarks, that the books which have stood the test of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has suffered from the various revolutions of knowledge and the prevalence

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of contrary customs, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boast, because the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.

It is, however, the task of criticism to establish principles; to improve opinion into knowledge; and to distinguish those means of pleasing which depend upon known causes and rational deduction, from the nameless and inexplicable elegancies which appeal wholly to the fancy from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantment of the soul. Criticism reduces those regions of literature under the dominion of science, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prescription.

There is nothing in the art of versifying so much exposed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the sound to the sense; or the representation of particular images, by the flow of the verse in which they are expressed. Every student has innumerable passages in which he, and perhaps he alone, discovers such resemblances; and since the attention of the present race of poetical readers seems particularly turned upon this species of elegance, I shall endeavour to examine how many of these conformities have been observed by the poets directed by the critics, how far they can be established upon nature and reason, and on what occasions they have been practised by Milton.

Homer, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, as *that, of all the poets, exhibited the greatest variety of sound*: 'For there are,' says he, 'innumerable passages in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of passion, and stillness of repose; or, in which, on the contrary, brevity, speed, and eagerness, are evidently marked out by the sound of the syllables. Thus the anguish and slow pace with which the blind Polyphemus groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, is perceived in the cadence of the verses which describe it:

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Κίχλων δὲ στενάχων τε καὶ ὠδύνων ὑδύνησι,
Χασρὶ Φηλοφών —————

Mean time the *Cyclops* raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and seaches round and round.

POPE.

The critic then proceeds to shew that the efforts of Achilles struggling in his armour against the current of a river, sometimes resisting and sometimes yielding, may be perceived in the elisions of the syllables, the slow accession of the feet, and the strength of the consonants:

Δῖνον δ' ἀμφ' Ἀχιμῆα κυκώμενον ἴσατο κύμα.
Ὦθει δ' ἐν σάκει πηκτῶν ροῦ· οὐδὲ πόδεςσιν
ἔσκει σφριξασθαι. —————

So oft the surge, in wat'ry mountains spread,
Beats on his back, or bursts upon his head;
Yet dauntless still the adverse flood he braves,
And still indignant bounds above the waves.
Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil;
Wash'd from beneath him, slides the slimy foil. POPE.

When Homer describes the crush of men dashed against a rock, he collects the most unpleasing and harsh sounds:

Σὺν δὲ δύω μάστιγας, ὥς τε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ
κόπτ'. ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέει, δεινὴ δὲ γαῖαν.

—————His bloody hand

Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor;
The pavement swims with brains and mingl'd gore.

POPE.

And when he would place before the eyes something dreadful and astonishing, he makes choice of the strongest vowels, and the letters of most difficult utterance:

Q

Tñ

Τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις ἐρεφὲς ἄνλο
Δαίμον' ἀεχμομένη· περὶ δὲ Δαίμονος τε Φόβος τε.

Tremendous Gorgon frown'd upon its field,
And circling terrors fill'd th' expressive shield. Po

Many other examples Dionysius produces; but he will sufficiently shew that either he was fanciful, or have lost the genuine pronunciation; for I know not whether, in any one of these instances, such similitude can be discovered. It seems indeed probable, that the variation with which Homer was read, produced many figurative beauties; for though it is certain that the force of many of his verses very justly corresponds with the things expressed, yet when the force of his imagination, which gave him full possession of every object, is considered, together with the flexibility of his language, in which the syllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleasure, it will seem unlikely that such conformity should happen less frequently even without design.

It is not, however, to be doubted that Virgil, who wrote amidst the light of criticism, and who owed much of his success to art and labour, endeavoured, among other excellencies, to exhibit this similitude; nor has he been less happy in this than in the other graces of versification. This felicity of his numbers was, at the review of learning, displayed with great elegance by Vida, in his Art of Poetry:

*Haud satis est illis utcumque claudere versum —
Omnia sed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,
Atque seno quocumque canunt misantur, et apta
Verborum facio, et quæsito carminis ore.
Nam diversa opus est veluti dare versibus ora —
Hic melior motuque pedum, et pernicious alis,
Molle viam tacito lapsu per tertia radit;
Ille autem membris, ac mole ignavus ingens
Incedit tardo molimine subsidendo.
Ecce aliquis subit egregio pulcherrimus ore,
Cui letam membris Venus omnibus afflât honorem.
Contra alius rudis, informes ostendit et artus,*

Hir

Hispatumque supercilium, ac caudum sinuosam,
 Innotatus visa sonitu alla tabilis ipso —
 Ergo ubi jam nautæ spumas salis ære ruentes
 Incubuerunt mari, videat spumare reductis
 Convallum remis, rostrisque stridentibus æquor.
 Tunc longe sale saxa sonant, tunc et freta ventis
 Incipiunt agitata tumescere; litore fluitus
 Illidunt rauco, atque refracta remarmurat unda
 Ad scopulos, cumulo insequitur præruptus aquæ mons —
 Cum vero ex alto speculatus cæcula Nereus
 Lenit in morem stagni, placideque paludis,
 Labitur uncta vadis abies, natæ unda carina.
 Verba etiam res exiguas angusta sequuntur,
 Ingentesque juvant ingentia; cuncta gigantem
 Vasta decent, vultus immanes, pectora lata,
 Et magni membrorum artus, magna ossa luctique.
 Atque adeo, siquid geritur molimine magno,
 Adde moram, et pariter tecum quoque vota laborens
 Segnia; seu quando vi multa globa cæctis
 Aternum frangenda bidentibus, sequere seu cum
 Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum.
 At mora si fuerit damno, properare jubebo.
 Si se forte cava extulerit mala vipera terra,
 Tolle moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, passer;
 Forte citi flammæ, date tela, repellite possom.
 Ipsa etiam versus ruat, in præcepisq; feratur,
 Immenso cum præcipitans ruit Occano nox,
 Aut cum percussus graviter procumbit humi bos,
 Cumque etiam requies rebus datur, ipsa quoque ultio
 Carmina paulisper cursu cessare videbis.
 In medio interrupta; quiescant cum freta ponti,
 Pæsquæ auri posuere, qui scire protinus ipsorum
 Cernere erit, mediisque incipit hylere versum.
 Quid dicam, sonitum cum telum imbelles sine ictu
 Invalidus jacit, et defectis viribus æger?
 Num quoque tum versus segni pariter pede languet;
 Sanguis habet, frigent effectus in corpore vires
 Fortem autem juvenem deceat prorumpere in arces,
 Evertere domos, præfractaque quadrupedantum
 Pectora pectoribus perrumpere, sternere turres
 Ingentes, totoque, serum dare sancta campo.

'Tis not enough his verses to complete,
 In measure, number, or determin'd feet.
 To all, proportion'd terms he must dispense,
 And make the sound a picture of the sense;
 The correspondent words exactly frame;
 The look, the features, and the mien the same.
 With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
 This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away;
 This blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
 And Venus breathes on ev'ry limb a grace;
 That, of rude form, his uncouth members shows,
 Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows;
 His monstrous tail in many a fold and wind,
 Voluminous and vast, curls up behind;
 At once the image and the lines appear,
 Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.
 Lo! when the sailors steer the pond'rous ships,
 And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps,
 Incumbent on the main that roars around,
 Beneath the lab'ring oars the waves resound;
 The prows wide echoing thro' the dark profound.
 To the loud call each distant rock replies;
 Toss'd by the storm the tow'ring surges rise;
 While the hoarse ocean beats the sounding shore,
 Dash'd from the strand, the flying waters roar.
 Flash at the shock, and gath'ring in a heap,
 The liquid mountains rise, and overhang the deep.
 But when blue Neptune from his car surveys,
 And calms at one regard the raging seas,
 Stretch'd like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,
 And the pitch'd vessel o'er the surface glides.
 When things are small, the terms should still be so;
 For low words please us when the theme is low.
 But when some giant, horrible and grim,
 Enormous in his gait, and vast in ev'ry limb,
 Stalks tow'ring on, the swelling words must rise
 In just proportion to the monster's size.
 If some large weight his huge arms strive to shove,
 The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move.
 When each stiff clod beneath the pond'rous plough
 Crumbles and breaks, th' encumber'd lines must slow.
 Nor less, when pilots catch the friendly gales,
 Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the wide-stretch'd sails.
 But if the poem suffers from delay,
 Let the lines fly precipitate away;

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And when the viper issues from the brake,
 Be quick; with stones, and brands, and fire, attack
 His rising creil, and drive the serpent back.
 When night descends, or stunn'd by numerous strokes,
 And groaning, to the earth drops the vast ox;
 The line too sinks with correspondent sound,
 Flat with the steer, and headlong to the ground.
 When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,
 And hush the roarings of the sea to peace;
 So oft we see the interrupted strain
 Stopp'd in the midst—and with the silent main
 Pause for a space—at last it glides again.
 When Priam strains his aged arms, to throw
 His unavailing jav'lin at the foe
 (His blood congeal'd, and ev'ry nerve unstrung)
 Then with the theme complies the artful song;
 Like him, the solitary numbers flow,
 Weak, trembling, melancholy, stiff, and slow.
 Not so young Pyrrhus, who with rapid force
 Beats down embattled armies in his course.
 The raging youth on trembling Ilion falls,
 Bursts her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls;
 Provokes his flying courier to the speed,
 In full career to charge the warlike steed;
 He piles the field with mountains of the slain;
 He pours, he storms, he thunders thro' the plain. PITT.

From the Italian gardens Pope seems to have transplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a soil less adapted to its nature, and less favourable to its increase.

Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
 But when loud billows lash the sounding shore,
 The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
 The line too labours, and the words move slow;
 Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 Flies o'er th'unbending corn, and skims along the main.

From these lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected

expected from the most diligent endeavours after the imagery of sound. The verse intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility; and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed, distinctly imaged, for it requires very little skill to make our language rough; but in these lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction, or delay. The swiftness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified: why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they therefore naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules and these examples have taught our present critics to enquire very studiously and minutely into sounds and cadences. It is therefore useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded, what discoveries they have made, and whether any rules can be established which may guide us hereafter in such researches.

No. XCIII. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1751.

———Experiar quid concedatur in illos
 Quorum flaminia tegitur cinis atque latina. Juv.

More safely truth to urge her claim presumes,
 On names now found alone on books and tombs.

THERE are few books on which more time is spent by young students, than on treatises which deliver the characters of authors; nor any which oftener deceive the expectation of the reader, or fill his mind with

more

more opinions which the progress of his studies and the increase of his knowledge oblige him to resign.

Baillet has introduced his collection of the decisions of the learned, by an enumeration of the prejudices which mislead the critic, and raise the passions in rebellion against the judgment. His catalogue, though large, is imperfect; and who can hope to complete it? The beauties of writing have been observed to be often such as cannot, in the present state of human knowledge, be convinced by evidence, or drawn out into demonstrations; they are therefore wholly subject to the imagination, and do not force their effects upon a mind preoccupied by unfavourable sentiments, nor overcome the counteraction of a false principle or of stubborn partiality.

To convince any man against his will is hard; but to please him against his will is justly pronounced by Dryden to be above the reach of human abilities. Interest and passion will hold out long against the closest siege of diagrams and syllogisms, but they are absolutely impregnable to imagery and sentiment; and will for ever bid defiance to the most powerful strains of Virgil or Homer, though they may give way in time to the batteries of Euclid or Archimedes.

In trusting therefore to the sentence of a critic, we are in danger not only from that vanity which exalts writers too often to the dignity of teaching what they are yet to learn, from that negligence which sometimes steals upon the most vigilant caution, and that fallibility to which the condition of nature has subjected every human understanding; but from a thousand extrinsic and accidental causes, from every thing which can excite kindness or malevolence, veneration or contempt.

Many of those who have determined with great boldness upon the various degrees of literary merit, may be justly suspected of having passed sentence, as Seneca remarks of Claudius,—

*Una tantum parte audita,
Sæpe et nulla,*

without much knowledge of the cause before them: for it will not be easily imagined of Langbane, Borrichius, or

or Rapin, that they had very accurately perused all the books which they praise or censure; or that, even if nature and learning had qualified them for judges, they could read for ever with the attention necessary for criticism. Such performances, however, are not without their use; for they are commonly just echoes of the voice of fame, and transmit the general suffrages of mankind when they have no particular motives to impress it.

Critics, like the rest of mankind, are very frequently misled by interest. The bigotry with which editors regard the authors whom they illustrate or correct, has been generally remarked. Dryden was known to have written most of his critical dissertations only to recommend the work upon which he then happened to be employed; and Addison is suspected to have denied the expediency of poetical justice, because his own *Cato* was condemned to perish in a good cause.

There are prejudices which authors, not otherwise weak or corrupt, have indulged without scruple; and perhaps some of them are so complicated with our natural affections, that they cannot easily be disentangled from the heart. Scarcely any can hear with impartiality a comparison between the writers of his own and another country; and though it cannot, I think, be charged equally on all nations that they are blinded with literary patriotism, yet there are none that do not look upon their authors with the fondness of affinity, and esteem them as well for the place of their birth as for their knowledge or their wit. There is, therefore, freedom much respect due to comparative criticism when the competitors are of different countries, unless the judge is of a nation equally indifferent to both. The Italians could not for a long time believe that there was any learning beyond the mountains; and the French were generally persuaded, that there are no wits or real talents equal to their own. I can scarcely conceive, that Scaliger had not considered himself as allied to Virgil, being born in the same country, he would have found his works so much superior to those of Homer, or have thought

thought the controversy worthy of so much zeal, vehemence, and acrimony.

There is, indeed, one prejudice, and only one, by which it may be doubted whether it is any dishonour to be sometimes misguided. Criticism has so often given occasion to the envious and ill-natured of gratifying their malignity, that some have thought it necessary to recommend the virtue of candor without restriction, and to exclude all future liberty of censure. Writers possessed with this opinion are continually enforcing civility and decency, recommending to critics the proper diffidence of themselves, and inculcating the veneration due to celebrated names.

I am not of opinion that these professed enemies of arrogance and severity have much more benevolence or modesty than the rest of mankind; or that they feel in their own hearts any other intention than to distinguish themselves by their softness and delicacy. Some are modest because they are timorous, and some are lavish of praise because they hope to be repaid.

There is indeed some tenderness due to living writers, when they attack none of those truths which are of importance to the happiness of mankind, and having committed no other offence than that of betraying their own ignorance or dulness. I should think it cruelty to crush an insect who had provoked me only by buzzing in my ear; and would not willingly interrupt the dream of harmless stupidity, or destroy the jest which makes its author laugh. Yet I am far from thinking this tenderness universally necessary; for he that writes may be considered as a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack; since he quits the common rank of life, steps forward beyond the lists, and offers his merit to the public judgment. To commence author is to claim praise; and no man can justly aspire to honour without the hazard of disgrace.

But whatever be decided concerning contemporaries, whom he that knows the treachery of the human heart, and considers how often we gratify our own pride or envy under the appearance of contending for elegance and

and propriety, will find himself not much inclined to disturb; there can surely be no exemptions pleaded to secure them from criticism, who can no longer suffer by reproach, and of whom nothing now remains but their writings and their names. Upon these authors the critic is undoubtedly at full liberty to exercise the strictest severity, since he endangers only his own fame, and, like Æneas when he drew his sword in the infernal regions, encounters phantoms which cannot be wounded. He may indeed pay some regard to established reputation, but he can by that shew of reverence consult only his own security; for all other motives are now at an end.

The faults of a writer of acknowledged excellence are more dangerous, because the influence of his example is more extensive; and the interest of learning requires that they should be discovered and stigmatized before they have the sanction of antiquity conferred upon them, and become precedents of indisputable authority.

It has indeed been advanced by Addison, as one of the characteristics of a true critic, that he points out beauties rather than faults. But it is rather natural to a man of learning and genius, to apply himself chiefly to the study of writers who have more beauties than faults to be displayed: for the duty of criticism is neither to depreciate nor dignify by partial representations, but to hold out the light of reason, whatever it may discover; and to promulgate the determinations of truth, whatever the shall dictate.

No. XCIV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1751.

— Bonus atque fidus
 Judex—per obstantes catervas
 Explicuit seæ victor arma.

HOR.

Perpetual magistrate is he
 Who keeps strict justice full in sight;
 Who bids the crowd at awful distance gaze,
 And virtue's arms victoriously displays.

FRANCIS.

THE resemblance of poetic numbers to the subject which they mention or describe, may be considered as general or particular; as consisting in the flow and structure of a whole passage taken together, or as comprised in the sound of some emphatical and descriptive words, or in the cadence and harmony of single verses.

The general resemblance of the sound to the sense is to be found in every language which admits of poetry, in every author whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind, and whose choice and variety of language readily supplies him with just representations. To such a writer it is natural to change his measure with his subject, even without any effort of understanding, or intervention of the judgment. To involve jollity and mirth, necessarily tunes the voice of a poet to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his eye with gaiety; and reflection on gloomy situations and disastrous events, will sadden his numbers as it will cloud his countenance. But in such passages there is only the multitude of pleasure to pleasure, and of grief to grief, without any immediate application to particular images. The same flow of joyous versification will celebrate the jollity of marriage and the exultation of triumph, and the same languor of melody will suit the complaints of an absent lover as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that on many occasions we make the music which we imagine ourselves to hear; that

that we modulate the poem by our own disposition, and ascribe to the numbers the effects of the sense. We may observe in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasing message in an unpleasing manner, and that we readily associate beauty and deformity with those whom for any reason we love or hate. Yet it would be too daring to declare that all the celebrated adaptations of harmony are chimerical; that Homer had no extraordinary attention to the melody of his verse when he described a nuptial festivity—

Νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δαΐδων ὃ πολλαὶ τόμεναι,
 Ἠγνέον ἀνὰ ἄστρ, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὄρεσσει;

Here sacred pomp and genial feast delight,
 And solemn dance, and hymeneal rite;
 Along the street the new-made brides are led,
 With torches flaming to the nuptial bed;
 The youthful dancers in a circle bound
 To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound. POPE.

that Vida was merely fanciful, when he supposed Virgil endeavouring to represent by uncommon sweetness of numbers the adventitious beauty of Æneas;

*Os, humerosque Deo similis: namque ipse decoram
 Cæsariem nato genitrix, lumenque juventæ
 Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflarat honores.*

The Trojan chief appear'd in open sight,
 August in visage, and serenely bright.
 His mother goddess, with her hands divine,
 Had form'd his curling locks, and made his temples shine
 And giv'n his rolling eyes a sparkling grace,
 And breath'd a youthful vigour on his face.

DRYDEN.

or that Milton did not intend to exemplify the harmony which he mentions:

Fountains! and ye that warble as ye flow,
 Melodious murmurs! warbling tune his praise.

TH

That Milton understood the force of sounds well ad-
 justed, and knew the compass and variety of the ancient
 measures, cannot be doubted, since he was both a musi-
 cian and a critic; but he seems to have considered these
 conformities of cadence as either not often attainable in
 our language, or as petty excellencies unworthy of his
 ambition; for it will not be found that he has always
 assigned the same cast of numbers to the same objects.
 He has given in two passages very minute descriptions of
 angelic beauty; but though the images are nearly the
 same, the numbers will be found upon comparison very
 different.

And now a stripling cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smil'd celestial, and to ev'ry limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well be feign'd;
 Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold.

Some of the lines of this description are remarkably de-
 fective in harmony, and therefore by no means corre-
 spondent with that symmetrical elegance and easy grace
 which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, how-
 ever, is fully compensated by the representation of Ra-
 phael, which equally delights the ear and imagination.

A seraph wing'd: six wings he wore to shade
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament; the middle pair
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
 And colours dipp'd in heaven; the third his feet
 Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
 Sky tinctur'd grain! like Maia's son he stood,
 And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
 The circuit wide.—

The adumbration of particular and distinct images by
 an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound, is some-
 times

times studied, and sometimes casual. Every language has many words formed in imitation of the noises which they signify. Such are *Stridor*, *Balo*, and *Beatus*, in Latin; and, in English, to *growl*, to *buz*, to *hiss*, and to *jar*. Words of this kind give to a verse the propriety and such happiness is therefore rather to be attributed to fortune than skill; yet they are sometimes combined with great propriety, and undeniably contribute to enforce the impression of the idea. We hear the passing arrow in this line of Virgil—

Et fugit horrendam stridens elapsa sagitta;

Th' impetuous arrow whizzes on the wing. Pope.

and the creaking of hell-gates, in the description of Milton,—

Open fly

With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors; and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns and perhaps the ancients, have observed, seem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. Dionysius himself tells us, that the sound of Homer's verse sometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk:—is not this a discovery nearly approaching to that of the learned man, who after long enquiry into the nature of the scarlet colour, found that it represented nothing so much as the clangour of a trumpet? The representative power of poetic harmony consists of sound and measure; of the force of the syllables singly considered, and of the time which they are pronounced. Sound can resemble nothing but sound, and time can measure nothing but motion and duration.

The critics, however, have struck out other similitudes; nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot discover to be eminently beautiful.

beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of these lines has been celebrated by writers whose opinion the world has reason to regard—

Vertitur interea cœlum, et ruit oceano nox.—

Meantime the rapid heav'ns rowl'd down the light,
And on the shaded ocean rush'd the night. DRYDEN.

Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos.—

Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound;
Ere sprawls in pangs of death, and spins the ground.

DRYDEN.

Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus—
The mountains labour, and a mouse is born.

ROSCOMMON.

If all these observations are just, there must be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a mouse from a mountain; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly impressed by the same form and termination of the verse.

We may, however, without giving way to enthusiasm, admit that some beauties of this kind may be produced. A sudden stop at an unusual syllable may image the cessation of action, or the pause of discourse; and Milton has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo:

I fled, and cry'd out *death*;
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back rebounded *death*.

The measure or time in pronouncing may be varied so as very strongly to represent, not only the modes of external motion, but the quick or slow succession of ideas, and consequently the passions of the mind. This, at least, was the power of the spondaic and dactylic harmony;

mony; but our language can reach no eminent diversities of sound. We can indeed sometimes, by encumbering and retarding the line, shew the difficulty of progress made by strong efforts and with frequent interruptions, or mark a slow and heavy motion. Thus Milton has imaged the toil of Satan struggling through chaos—

So he with difficulty and labour hard
Mov'd on: with difficulty and labour he—

thus he has described the leviathans or whales—

Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait.

But he has at other times neglected such representations, as may be observed in the volubility and levity of these lines, which express an action tardy and reluctant—

Descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
With what confusion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low! Th'ascent is easy then.

In another place he describes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting:

Tripping ebb; that stole
With soft foot tow'ards the deep, who now had stopp'd
His sluices.

It is not indeed to be expected that the sound should always assist the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it: and therefore Milton has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he implored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addressed the earth.

Those who are determined to find in Milton an assemblage of all the excellencies which have ennobled all other

other poets, will perhaps be offended that I do not celebrate his versification in higher terms; for there are readers who discover that in this passage,—

So stretch'd out huge in length the arch fiend lay,

long form is described in a *long* line; but the truth is, that length of body is only mentioned in a *slow* line, to which it has only the resemblance of time to space, of an hour to a maypole.

The same turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the description of the ark:

Then from the mountains hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
Measur'd by cubit, length, breadth, and height.

In these lines the poet apparently designs to fix the attention upon bulk; but this is effected by the enumeration, not by the measure; for what analogy can there be between modulations of sound and corporeal dimensions?

Milton, indeed, seems only to have regarded this species of embellishment so far, as not to reject it when it came unsought; which would often happen to a mind so vigorous, employed upon a subject so various and extensive. He had, indeed, a great and nobler work to perform; a single sentiment of moral or religious truth, a single image of life or nature, would have been cheaply lost for a thousand echoes of the cadence to the sense; and he who had undertaken to *vindicate the ways of God to man*, might have been accused of neglecting his cause, had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds.

No. XCV. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1751.

Parcus deorum cultor, et infrequens,
 Infanientis dum sapientix
 Consultus erro; nunc retrorsum
 Vela dare atque, iterare cursus
 Cogor relictos. HOK.

A fugitive from heav'n and prayer,
 I mock'd at all religious fear,
 Deep scienc'd in the mazy lore
 Of mad philosophy; but now
 Hoist sail, and back by voyage plow
 To that blest harbour which I left before.

FRANCIS.

*To the Rambler.**Sir,*

THERE are many diseases both of the body and mind which it is far easier to prevent than to cure; and therefore I hope you will think me employed in an office not useless either to learning or virtue, if I describe the symptoms of an intellectual malady, which, though at first it seizes only the passions, will, if not speedily remedied, infect the reason, and, from blasting the blossoms of knowledge, proceed in time to canker the root.

I was born in the house of discord. My parents were of unsuitable ages, contrary tempers, and different religions; and therefore employed the spirit and acuteness which nature had very liberally bestowed upon both, in hourly disputes, and incessant contrivances to detect each other in the wrong; so that from the first exertions of reason I was bred a disputant, trained up in all the arts of domestic sophistry, initiated in a thousand low stratagems, nimble shifts, and sly concealments; versed in all the turns of altercation, and acquainted with the whole discipline of *fending* and *proving*.

It was necessarily my care to preserve the kindness of both the controvertists; and therefore I had very early formed the habit of suspending my judgment, of hearing arguments

arguments with indifference, inclining as occasion required to either side, and of holding myself undetermined between them till I knew for what opinion I might conveniently declare.

Thus, Sir, I acquired very early the skill of disputation; and, as we naturally love the arts in which we believe ourselves to excel, I did not let my abilities lie useless, nor suffer my dexterity to be lost for want of practice. I engaged in perpetual wrangles with my school-fellows, and was never to be convinced or repressed by any other argument than blows; by which my antagonist commonly determined the controversy, as I was, like the Roman orator, much more eminent for eloquence than courage.

At the university I found my predominant ambition completely gratified by the study of logic. I impressed upon my memory a thousand axioms, and ten thousand distinctions, practised every form of syllogism, passed all my days in the schools of disputation, and slept every night with Smiglecius on my pillow.

You will not doubt but such a genius was soon raised to eminence by such application: I was celebrated in my third year for the most artful opponent that the university could boast, and became the terror and envy of all the candidates for philosophical reputation.

My renown, indeed, was not purchased but at the price of all my time and all my studies. I never spoke but to contradict, nor declaimed but in defence of a position universally acknowledged to be false, and therefore worthy, in my opinion, to be adorned with all the colours of false representation, and strengthened with all the art of fallacious subtilty.

My father, who had no other wish than to see his son richer than himself, easily concluded that I should distinguish myself among the professors of the law; and therefore, when I had taken my first degree, dispatched me to the Temple with a paternal admonition, that I should never suffer myself to feel shame; for nothing but modesty could retard my fortune.

Vitiated, ignorant, and heady as I was, I had not yet
lost

lost my reverence for virtue, and therefore could not receive such dictates without horror; but, however, was pleased with his determination of my course of life, because he placed me in the way that leads soonest from the prescribed walks of discipline and education, to the open fields of liberty and choice.

I was now in the place where every one catches the contagion of vanity, and soon began to distinguish myself by sophisms and paradoxes. I declared war against all received opinions and established rules, and levelled my batteries particularly against those universal principles which had stood unshaken in all the vicissitudes of literature, and are considered as the inviolable temples of truth, or the impregnable bulwarks of science.

I applied myself chiefly to those parts of learning which have filled the world with doubt and perplexity; and could readily produce all the arguments relating to matter and motion, time and space, identity and infinity.

I was equally able and equally willing to maintain the system of Newton or Descartes, and favoured occasionally the hypothesis of Ptolemy, or that of Copernicus. I sometimes exalted vegetables to sense, and sometimes degraded animals to mechanism.

Nor was I less inclined to weaken the credit of history, or perplex the doctrines of polity. I was always of the party which I heard the company condemn.

Among the zealots of liberty I could harangue with great copiousness upon the advantage of absolute monarchy, the secrecy of its counsels, and the expedition of its measures; and often celebrated the blessings produced by the extinction of parties, and preclusion of debates.

Among the assertors of regal authority, I never failed to declaim with republican warmth upon the original charter of universal liberty, the corruption of courts, and the folly of voluntary submission to those whom nature has levelled with ourselves.

I knew the defects of every scheme of government, and the inconveniencies of every law. I sometimes shewed how much the condition of mankind would be improved, by breaking the world into petty sovereignties, and some-

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times displayed the felicity and peace which universal monarchy would diffuse over the earth.

To every acknowledged fact I found innumerable objections; for it was my rule to judge of history only by abstracted probability; and therefore I made no scruple of bidding defiance to testimony. I have more than once questioned the existence of Alexander the Great; and, having demonstrated the folly of erecting edifices, like the pyramids of Egypt, I frequently hinted my suspicion that the world had been long deceived, and that they were to be found only in the narratives of travellers.

It had been happy for me could I have confined my scepticism to historical controversies and philosophical disquisitions; but having now violated my reason and accustomed myself to enquire not after proofs, but objections, I had perplexed truth with falsehood till my ideas were confused, my judgment embarrassed, and my intellects distorted. The habit of considering every proposition as alike uncertain, left me no test by which any tenet could be tried; every opinion presented both sides with equal evidence, and my fallacies began to operate upon my own mind in more important enquiries. It was at last the sport of my vanity to weaken the obligations of moral duty, and efface the distinctions of good and evil, till I had deadened the sense of conviction, and abandoned my heart to the fluctuations of uncertainty, without anchor and without compass, without satisfaction of curiosity or peace of conscience, without principles or reason, or motives of action.

Such is the hazard of repressing the first perceptions of truth, of spreading for diversion the snares of sophistry, and engaging reason against its own determinations.

The disproportions of absurdity grow less and less visible as we are reconciled by degrees to the deformity of a mistress; and falsehood, by long use, is assimilated to the mind as poison to the body.

I had soon the mortification of seeing my conversation courted only by the ignorant or wicked; by either boys who were enchanted by novelty, or wretches, who having

ing long disobeyed virtue and reason, were now desirous of my assistance to dethrone them.

Thus alarmed, I shuddered at my own corruption and that pride by which I had been seduced, contributed to reclaim me. I was weary of continual irresolution and a perpetual equipoise of the mind; and ashamed of being the favourite of those who were scorned and shunned by the rest of mankind.

I therefore retired from all temptation to dispute, prescribed a new regimen to my understanding, and resolved, instead of rejecting all established opinions which I could not prove, to tolerate though not adopt all which I could not confute. I forbore to heat my imagination with needless controversies, to discuss questions confessedly uncertain, and refrained steadily from gratifying my vanity by the support of falsehood.

By this method I am at length recovered from my argumental delirium, and find myself in the state of one awakened from the confusion and tumult of a feverish dream. I rejoice in the new possession of evidence and reality, and step on from truth to truth with confidence and quiet.

I am, Sir, &c.

PERTINAX.

No. XCVI. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1751

Quod si Platonis musa personat verum,
Quod quisque discit, immemor recordatur.

BOETIUS.

Truth in Platonic ornaments bedeck'd,
Inforc'd we love, unheeding recollect.

IT is reported of the Persians, by an ancient writer, that the fun of their education consisted in teaching youth to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth.

The bow and the horse were easily mastered; but it

would

would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what preservatives a Persian mind was secured against the temptations to falsehood.

There are, indeed, in the present corruption of mankind, many incitements to forsake truth; the need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of imposing on the ignorance or credulity of others, so frequently occur; so many immediate evils are to be avoided, and so many present gratifications obtained by craft and delusion, that very few of those who are much entangled in life have spirit and constancy sufficient to support them in the steady practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to speak truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it; for no species of falsehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant by interest, and the friend by tenderness: those who are neither servile nor timorous, are yet desirous to bestow pleasure; and while unjust demands of praise continue to be made, there will always be some whom hope, fear, or kindness, will dispose to pay them.

The guilt of falsehood is very widely extended; and many whom their conscience can scarcely charge with stooping to a lie, have vitiated the morals of others by their vanity, and patronized the vice which they believe themselves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for its own sake; it is generally unpleasing, because contrary to our wishes, and opposite to our practice; and as our attention naturally follows our interest, we hear unwillingly what we are afraid to know, and soon forget what we have no inclination to impress upon our memories.

For this reason many arts of instruction have been invented, by which the reluctance against truth may be overcome; and as physic is given to children in confections, precepts have been hidden under a thousand appearances, that mankind may be bribed by pleasure to escape destruction.

While the world was yet in its infancy. Truth came among mortals from above, and Falsehood from below.

Truth

Truth was the daughter of Jupiter and Wisdom; Falsehood was the progeny of Folly, impregnated by the wind. They advanced with equal confidence to seize the dominion of the new creation; and as their enmity and their force were well known to the celestials, all the eyes of heaven were turned upon the contest.

Truth seemed conscious of superior power and just claim, and therefore came on towering and majestic, unassisted and alone; Reason indeed always attended her, but appeared her follower rather than companion. Her march was slow and stately, but her motion was perpetually progressive; and when once she had grounded her foot, neither gods nor men could force her to retire.

Falsehood always endeavoured to copy the mien and attitudes of Truth, and was very successful in the art of mimicry. She was surrounded, animated, and supported by innumerable legions of appetites and passions; but like other feeble commanders, was obliged often to receive law from her allies. Her motions were sudden, irregular, and violent; for she had no steadiness nor constancy. She often gained conquests by hasty incursions, which she never hoped to keep by her own strength, but maintained by the help of the passions, whom she generally found resolute and faithful.

It sometimes happened that the antagonists met in full opposition. In these encounters, Falsehood always invested her head with clouds, and commanded Fraud to place ambushes about her. In her left hand she bore the shield of Impudence; and the quiver of Sophistry rattled on her shoulder. All the passions attended at her call; Vanity clapped her wings before, and Obsequy supported her behind. Thus guarded and assisted, she sometimes advanced against Truth, and sometimes waited the attack; but always endeavoured to skirmish at a distance, perpetually shifted her ground, and let fly her arrows in different directions; for she certainly found that her strength failed whenever the eye of Truth darted full upon her.

Truth had the awful aspect though not the thunder of her father; and when the long continuance of the contest brought them near to one another, Falsehood let the

arms of Sophistry fall from her grasp, and holding up the shield of Impudence with both her hands, sheltered herself amongst the passions.

Truth, though she was often wounded, always recovered in a short time; but it was common for the slightest hurt, received by Falsehood, to spread its malignity to the neighbouring parts, and to burst open again when it seemed to have been cured.

Falsehood, in a short time, found by experience that her superiority consisted only in the celerity of her course and the changes of her posture. She therefore ordered Suspicion to beat the ground before her, and avoided with great care to cross the way of Truth, who, as she never varied her point, but moved constantly upon the same line, was easily escaped by the oblique and desultory movements, the quick retreats and active doubles which Falsehood always practised when the enemy began to raise terror by her approach.

By this procedure Falsehood every hour encroached upon the world, and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever she carried her victories she left the Passions in full authority behind her, who were so well pleased with command, that they held out with great obstinacy when Truth came to seize their posts, and never failed to retard her progress, though they could not always stop it; they yielded at last with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and sullen submission; and always inclined to revolt when truth ceased to awe them by her immediate presence.

Truth, who, when she first descended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by universal acclamation, cherished with kindness, heard with obedience, and invited to spread her influence from province to province, now found that, wherever she came, she must force her passage. Every intellect was precluded by Prejudice, and every heart preoccupied by Passion. She indeed advanced, but she advanced slowly; and often lost the conquests which she left behind her, by sudden insurrections of the appetites, that shook off their allegiance, and ranged themselves again under the banner of her enemy.

Truth, however, did not grow weaker by the struggle, for her vigour was unconquerable; yet she was provoked to see herself thus baffled and impeded by an enemy, whom she looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but such as she owed to inconstancy, weakness, and artifice. She therefore, in the anger of disappointment, called upon her father Jupiter to re-establish her in the skies, and leave mankind to the disorder and misery which they deserved, by submitting willingly to the usurpation of Falschhood.

Jupiter compassionated the world too much to grant her request, yet was willing to ease her labours, and mitigate her vexation. He commanded her to consult the Muses by what methods she might obtain an easier reception, and reign without the toil of incessant war. It was then discovered, that she obstructed her own progress by the severity of her aspect and the solemnity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her till they ceased to fear her, since by giving themselves up to Falschhood they seldom made any sacrifice of their ease or pleasure, because she took the shape that was most engaging, and always suffered herself to be dressed and painted by Desire. The Muses wove in the loom of Pallas a loose and changeable robe, like that in which Falschhood captivated her admirers; with this they invested Truth, and named her Fiction. She now went out again to conquer with more success; for when she demanded entrance of the Passions, they often mistook her for Falschhood, and delivered up their charge; but when she had once taken possession, she was soon disrobed by Reason, and shone out, in her original form, with native effulgence and resistless dignity.

No. XCVII. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1751.

Fæcunda culpæ secula nuptias
 Primum inquinavere, et genus, et domos,
 Hoc fonte derivata clades
 In patriam populumque fluxit.

HOR.

Fruitful of crimes, this age first stain'd
 Their hapless offspring, and profan'd
 The nuptial bed; from whence the woes,
 Which various and unnumber'd rose
 From this polluted fountain head,
 O'er Rome and o'er the nations spread. FRANCIS.

THE reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author from whom the age has received greater favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

WHEN the Spectator was first published in single papers, it gave me so much pleasure, that it is one of the favourite amusements of my age to recollect it; and when I reflect on the foibles of those times, as described in that useful work, and compare them with the vices now reigning among us, I cannot but wish that you would oftener take cognizance of the manners of the better half of the human species, that if your precepts and observations be carried down to posterity, the Spectators may shew to the rising generation what were the fashionable follies of their grandmothers, the Rambler of their mothers; and that from both they may draw instruction and warning.

When I read those Spectators which took notice of the misbehaviour of young women at church, by which they vainly hope to attract admirers, I used to pronounce such forward young women Seekers. in order to distinguish them by a mark of infamy from those who had patience and decency to stay till they were sought.

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But

But I have lived to see such a change in the manners of women, that I would now be willing to compound with them for that name, although I then thought it disgraceful enough, if they would deserve no worse; since now they are too generally given up to negligence of domestic business, to idle amusements, and to wicked rack-ets, without any settled view at all but of squandering time.

In the time of the Spectator, excepting sometimes an appearance in the ring, sometimes at a good and chosen play, sometimes on a visit at the house of a grave relation, the young ladies contented themselves to be found employed in domestic duties; for then routes, drums, balls, assemblies, and such like markets for women, were not known.

Modesty and diffidence, gentleness and meekness, were looked upon as the appropriate virtues and characteristic graces of the sex. And if a forward spirit pushed itself into notice, it was exposed in print as it deserved.

The churches were almost the only places where single women were to be seen by strangers. Men went thither expecting to see them, and perhaps too much for that only purpose.

But some good often resulted, however improper might be their motives: both sexes were in the way of their duty. The man must be abandoned indeed, who loves not goodness in another; nor were the young fellows of that age so wholly lost to a sense of right as pride and conceit has since made them affect to be. When therefore they saw a fair one, whose decent behaviour and cheerful piety shewed her earnest in her first duties, they had the less doubt, judging politically only, that she would have a conscientious regard to her second.

With what ardour have I seen watched for, the rising of a kneeling beauty; and what additional charms has devotion given to her recommunicated features!

The men were often the better for what they heard. Even a Saul was once found prophesying among the prophets whom he had set out to destroy. To a man thus put into good-humour by a pleasing object, religion it-

self

self looked more amiable. The Men-seekers of the Spectator's time loved the holy place for the object's sake, and loved the object for her suitable behaviour in it.

Reverence mingled with their love; and they thought that a young lady of such good principles must be addressed only by the man who at least made a shew of good principles, whether his heart was yet quite right or not.

Nor did the young lady's behaviour, at any time of the service, lessen this reverence. Her eyes were her own, her ears the preacher's. Women are always most observed when they seem themselves least to observe, or to lay out for observation. The eye of a respectful lover loves rather to receive confidence from the withdrawn eye of the fair one, than to find itself obliged to retreat.

When a young gentleman's affection was thus laudably engaged, he pursued its natural dictates: keeping then was a rare, at least a secret and scandalous vice; and a wife was the summit of his wishes. Rejection was now dreaded, and pre-engagement apprehended. A woman whom he loved, he was ready to think must be admired by all the world. His fears, his uncertainties, increased his love.

Every enquiry he made into the lady's domestic excellence, which, when a wife is to be chosen, will surely not be neglected, confirmed him in his choice. He opens his heart to a common friend, and honestly discovers the state of his fortune. His friend applies to those of the young lady, whose parents, if they approve his proposals, disclose them to their daughter.

She perhaps is not an absolute stranger to the passion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his assiduities, his constant attendance at a church, whither, till of late, he used seldom to come, and a thousand little observances that he paid her, had very probably first forced her to regard, and then inclined her to favour him.

That a young lady should be in love, and the love of the young gentleman undeclared, is an heterodoxy which prudence, and even policy, must not allow. But thus

applied to, she is all resignation to her parents. Charming resignation, which inclination opposes not.

Her relations applaud her for her duty; friends meet; points are adjusted; delightful perturbations, and hopes, and a few lover's fears, fill up the tedious space, till an interview is granted; for the young lady had not made herself cheap at public places.

The time of interview arrives: she is modestly reserved; he is not confident. He declares his passion; the consciousness of her own worth, and his application to her parents, take from her any doubt of his sincerity; and she owns herself obliged to him for his good opinion. The enquiries of her friends into his character have taught her that his good opinion deserves to be valued.

She tacitly allows of his future visits; he renews them; the regard of each for the other is confirmed; and when he presses for the favour of her hand, he receives a declaration of an entire acquiescence with her duty, and a modest acknowledgment of esteem for him.

He applies to her parents, therefore, for a near day; and thinks himself under obligation to them for the cheerful and affectionate manner with which they receive his agreeable application.

With this prospect of future happiness the marriage is celebrated: gratulations pour in from every quarter. Parents and relations on both sides, brought acquainted in the course of the courtship, can receive the happy couple with countenances illumined, and joyful hearts.

The brothers, the sisters, the friends of one family, are the brothers, the sisters, the friends of the other. Their two families thus made one, are the world to the young couple.

Their home is the place of their principal delight, nor do they ever occasionally quit it but they find the pleasure of returning to it augmented in proportion to the time of their absence from it.

O! Mr. Rambler, forgive the talkativeness of an old man. When I courted and married my Lætitia, then a blooming beauty, every thing passed just so! But how is the case now! The ladies, maidens, wives, and widows,

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are engrossed by places of open resort and general entertainment, which fill every quarter of the metropolis, and being constantly frequented, make home irksome. Breakfasting-places, dining-places, routes, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas, masquerades for the evening, and even for all night; and lately, public sales of the goods of broken house-keepers, which the general dissoluteness of manners has contributed to make very frequent, come in as another seasonable relief to these modern time-killers.

In the summer there are in every country-town assemblies; Tunbridge, Bath, Cheltenham, Scarborough! What expence of dress and equipage is required to qualify the frequenters for such emulous appearance!

By the natural infection of example, the lowest people have places of six-penny resort, and gaming-tables for pence. Thus servants are now induced to fraud and dishonesty, to support extravagance, and supply their losses.

As to ladies who frequent those public places, they are not ashamed to shew their faces wherever men dare go, nor blush to try who shall stare most impudently, or who shall laugh loudest on the public walks.

The men who would make good husbands, if they visit those places, are frightened at wedlock, and resolve to live single, except they are bought at a very high price. They can be spectators of all that passes, and, if they please, more than spectators, at the expence of others. The companion of an evening and the companion for life, require very different qualifications.

Two thousand pounds in the last age, with a domestic wife would go farther than ten thousand in this. Yet settlements are expected, that often, to a mercantile man especially, sink a fortune into uselessness; and pin-money is stipulated for, which makes a wife independent, and destroys love, by putting it out of a man's power to lay any obligation upon her that might engage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to all this the card-tables are added, how can a prudent man think of marrying!

And when the worthy men know not where to find
wives,

wives, must not the sex be left to the foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age, whom they help to make such ! And need even these wretches marry to enjoy the conversation of those who render their company so cheap !

And what, after all, is the benefit which the gay coquette obtains by her flutters ! As she is approachable by every man, without requiring, I will not say incense or adoration, but even common complaisance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage : she has companions, indeed, but no lovers ; for love is respectful and timorous ; and where among all her followers will she find a husband !

Set, dear Sir, before the youthful, the gay, the inconsiderate, the contempt as well as the danger to which they are exposed. At one time or other, women, not utterly thoughtless, will be convinced of the justice of your censure, and the charity of your instruction.

But should your expostulations and reproofs have no effect upon those who are far gone in fashionable folly, they may be retailed from their mouths to their nieces (marriage will not often have intitled these to daughters) when they, the meteors of a day, find themselves elbowed off the stage of vanity by other flutterers ; for the most admired women cannot have many Tunbridge, many Bath seasons to blaze in ; since even fine faces, often seen, are less regarded than new faces : the proper punishment of showy girls, for rendering themselves so impolitically cheap.

I am,
Sir,

Your sincere admirer, &c.

No. XCVIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1751.

Quæ nec Sarmentus iniquas
 Cæsaris ad mensas, nec vilis Gabba tulisset Juv.
 Which not Sarmentus brook'd at Cæsar's board,
 Nor grov'ling Gabba from his haughty lord.

ELPHINSTON.

*To the Author of the Rambler.**Mr. Rambler,*

YOU have often endeavour'd to impress upon your readers an observation of more truth than novelty, that life passes, for the most part, in petty transactions; that our hours glide away in trifling amusements and slight gratifications; and that there very seldom emerges any occasion that can call forth great virtue or great abilities.

It very commonly happens that speculation has no influence on conduct. Just conclusions and cogent arguments, formed by laborious study and diligent enquiry, are often reposit'd in the treasuries of memory, as gold in the miser's chest, useless alike to others and himself. As some are not richer for the extent of their possessions, others are not wiser for the multitude of their ideas.

You have truly described the state of human beings, but it may be doubted whether you have accommodated your precepts to your description; whether you have not generally considered your readers as influenced by the tragic passions, and susceptible of pain or pleasure only from powerful agents, and from great events.

To an author who writes not for the improvement of a single art, or the establishment of a controverted doctrine, but equally intends the advantage, and equally courts the perusal of all the classes of mankind nothing can justly seem unworthy of regard by which the pleasure of conversation may be increased, and the daily satisfactions of familiar life secured from interruption and disgust.

For

For this reason you would not have injured your reputation, if you had sometimes descended to the minute duties of social beings, and enforced the observance of those little civilities and ceremonious delicacies which, though considerable as they may appear to the man of science, and difficult as they may prove to be detailed with dignity, yet contribute to the regulation of the world, and facilitating the intercourse between one man and another, and of which the French have sufficiently testified their esteem, by terming the knowledge and practice of them *Scavoir vivre—the art of living*.

Politeness is one of those advantages which we never estimate rightly but by the inconvenience of its loss. Its influence upon the manners is constant and uniform, so that, like an equal motion, it escapes perception. The circumstances of every action are so adjusted to each other, that we do not see where any error could have been committed, and rather acquiesce in its propriety than admire its exactness.

But as sickness shews us the value of ease, a little familiarity with those who were never taught to endeavour the gratification of others, but regulate their behaviour merely by their own will, will soon evince the necessity of established modes and formalities to the happiness and quiet of common life.

Wisdom and virtue are by no means sufficient, without the supplemental laws of good-breeding, to secure freedom from degenerating to rudeness, or self-esteem from swelling into insolence; a thousand in civilities may be committed, and a thousand offices neglected, without any remorse of conscience or reproach from reason.

The true effect of genuine politeness seems to be rather ease than pleasure. The power of delighting may be conferred by nature, and cannot be delivered by precept, or obtained by imitation; but though it be the privilege of a very small number to ravish and to charm every man may hope by rules and caution not to give pain, and may therefore, by the help of good-breeding, enjoy the kindness of mankind; though he should have no claim to higher distinctions.

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The universal axiom in which all complaisance is included, and from which flow all the formalities which custom has established in civilized nations, is, *That no man should give any preference to himself*. A rule so comprehensive and certain; that, perhaps, it is not easy for the mind to image an incivility, without supposing it to be broken.

There are, indeed, in every place, some particular modes of the ceremonial part of good-breeding, which, being arbitrary and accidental, can be learned only by habitude and conversation; such are the forms of salutation, the different gradations of reverence, and all the adjustments of place and precedence. These, however, may be often violated without offence, if it be sufficiently evident that neither malice nor pride contributed to the failure; but will not atone, however rigidly observed, for the tumour of insolence, or petulance of contempt.

I have, indeed, not found among any part of mankind, less real and rational complaisance than among those who have passed their time in paying and receiving visits, in frequenting public entertainments, in studying the exact measures of ceremony, and in watching all the variations of fashionable courtesy.

They know, indeed, at what hour they may beat the door of an acquaintance, how many steps they must attend him towards the gate, and what interval should elapse before his visit is returned; but seldom extends their care beyond the exterior and unessential parts of civility, nor refuse their own vanity any gratification, however expensive, to the quiet of another.

Trypherus is a man remarkable for splendor and elegance; a man that, having been originally placed by his fortune and rank in the first class of the community, has acquired that air of dignity, and that readiness in the exchange of compliments, which courts, balls, and levees, easily confer.

But Trypherus, without any settled purposes of magnanimity, partly by his ignorance of human nature, and partly by the habit of contemplating with great satisfaction his own grandeur and riches, is hourly giving disgust

gust to those whom chance or expectation subject to vanity.

To a man whose fortune confines him to a small house he declaims upon the pleasure of spacious apartments and the convenience of changing his lodging-room in different parts of the year; tells him that he hates confinement; and concludes, that if his chamber was less he should never wake without thinking of a prison.

To Eucretas, a man of birth equal to himself, but of much less estate, he shewed his services of plate, and remarked that such things were, indeed, nothing better than costly trifles, but that no man must pretend to the rank of gentleman without them; and, for his part, if his estate was smaller, he should not think of enjoying but encreasing it, and would enquire out a trade for his eldest son.

He has, in imitation of some more acute observer than himself, collected a great many shifts and artifices by which poverty is concealed; and among the ladies of small fortune, never fails to talk of frippery and slight silks, and the convenience of a general mourning.

I have been insulted a thousand times with a catalogue of his pictures, his jewels, and his rarities, which though he knows the humble neatness of my habitation, he seldom fails to conclude by a declaration, that where ever he sees a house meanly furnished, he despises the owner's taste, or pities his poverty.

This, Mr. Rambler, is the practice of Trypherus, by which he is become the terror of all who are less wealthy than himself, and has raised innumerable enemies without rivalry, and without malevolence.

Yet though all are not equally culpable with Trypherus, it is scarcely possible to find any man who does not frequently, like him, indulge his own pride by forcing others into a comparison with himself, when he knows the advantage is on his side, without considering that unnecessarily to obtrude displeasing ideas, is a species of oppression; and that it is little more criminal to deprive another of some real advantage than to interrupt that forgiveness of its absence which is the next step to actual possession.

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No. XCIX. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1751.

Scilicet ingeniis aliqua est concordia junctis,
 Et servat studii fœdera quisque sui,
 Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,
 Rectorem dubie navita puppis amat. OVID.

Congenial passions souls together bind,
 And ev'ry calling mingles with its kind;
 Soldier unites with soldier, swain with swain,
 The mariner with him that roves the main. F. LEWIS.

IT has been ordained by Providence, for the conservation of order in the immense variety of nature, and for the regular propagation of the several classes of life with which the elements are peopled, that every creature should be drawn by some secret attraction to those of his own kind; and that not only the gentle and domestic animals which naturally unite into companies, or cohabit by pairs, should continue faithful to their species; but even those ravenous and ferocious savages which Aristotle observes never to be gregarious, should range mountains and deserts in search of one another, rather than pollute the world with a monstrous birth.

As the perpetuity and distinction of the lower tribes of the creation require that they should be determined to proper mates by some uniform motive of choice, or some cogent principle of instinct, it is necessary likewise that man, whose wider capacity demands more gratifications, and who feels in himself innumerable wants, which a life of solitude cannot supply, and innumerable powers to which it cannot give employment, should be led to suitable companions by particular influence; and among many beings of the same nature with himself, he may select some for intimacy and tenderness, and improve the condition of his existence, by superadding friendship to humanity, and the love of individuals to that of the species.

Other animals are so formed, that they seem to contribute very little to the happiness of each other, and know neither joy, nor grief, nor love, nor hatred, but

as they are urged by some desire immediately subservient either to the support of their own lives, or to the continuation of their race; they therefore seldom appear to regard any of the minuter discriminations which distinguish creatures of the same kind from one another.

But if man were to feel no incentives to kindness more than his general tendency to congenial nature, Babylon or London, with all their multitudes, would have to him the desolation of a wilderness; his affections, not compressed into a narrower compass, would vanish like elemental fire in boundless evaporation; he would languish in perpetual insensibility; and though he might perhaps, in the first vigour of youth, amuse himself with the fresh enjoyments of life, yet, when curiosity should cease and alacrity subside, he would abandon himself to the fluctuations of chance, without expecting help against any calamity, or feeling any wish for the happiness of others.

To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible, at least impossible without the extinction of those passions which now produce all our pains and all our pleasures; without the disuse, if not the abolition, of some of our inclinations, and the suppression of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indifference.

The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness, which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the solicitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity, were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence, equally attentive to every misery.

The great community of mankind is, therefore, necessarily broken into smaller independent societies; these form distinct interests, which are too frequently opposed to each other, and which they who have entered into the league of particular governments falsely think it virtue to promote, however destructive to the happiness of the rest of the world.

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Such unions are again separated into subordinate classes and combinations; and social life is perpetually branched out into minuter subdivisions, till it terminates in the last ramifications of private friendship.

That friendship may at once be fond and lasting, it has been already observed in these papers, that a conformity of inclinations is necessary. No man can have much kindness for him by whom he does not believe himself esteemed; and nothing so evidently proves esteem as imitation.

That benevolence is always strongest which arises from participation of the same pleasures, since we are naturally willing to revive in our minds the memory of persons with whom the idea of enjoyment is connected.

It is commonly, therefore, to little purpose, that any one endeavours to ingratiate himself with such as he cannot accompany in their amusements and diversions. Men have been known to rise to favour and to fortune, only by being skilful in the sports with which their patron happened to be delighted, by concurring with his taste for some particular species of curiosities, by relishing the same wine, or applauding the same cookery.

Even those whom wisdom or virtue have placed above regard to such petty recommendations, must nevertheless be gained by similitude of manners. The highest and noblest enjoyment of familiar life, the communication of knowledge and reciprocation of sentiments, must always presuppose a disposition to the same inquiry, and delight in the same discoveries.

With what satisfaction could the politician lay his schemes for the reformation of laws, or his comparisons of different forms of government, before the chemist, who has never accustomed his thoughts to any other object than salt and sulphur! or how can the astronomer, in explaining his calculations and conjectures, endure the coldness of a grammarian, who would lose sight of Jupiter and all his satellites, for a happy etymology of an obscure word, or a better explication of a controverted line!

Every man loves merit of the same kind with his own,
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when it is not likely to hinder his advancement or his reputation; for he not only best understands the worth of those qualities which he labours to cultivate, or the usefulness of the art which he practises with success, but always feels a reflected pleasure from the praises which, though given to another, belong equally to himself.

There is indeed no need of research and refinement to discover that men must generally select their companions from their own state of life, since there are not many minds furnished for great variety of conversation, or adapted to multiplicity of intellectual entertainments.

The sailor, the academic, the lawyer, the mechanic, and the courtier, have all a cast of talk peculiar to their own fraternity, have fixed their attention upon the same events, have been engaged in affairs of the same sort, and make use of allusions and illustrations which themselves only can understand.

To be infected with the jargon of a particular profession, and to know only the language of a single rank of mortals, is indeed sufficiently despicable. But as limits must be always set to the excursions of the human mind, there will be some study which every man more zealously prosecutes, some darling subject on which he is principally pleased to converse; and he that can most inform or best understand him, will certainly be welcomed with particular regard.

Such partiality is not wholly to be avoided; nor is it culpable, unless so far to predominate as to produce aversion from every other kind of excellence, and to shade the lustre of dissimilar virtues. Those, therefore, whom the lot of life has conjoined, should endeavour constantly to approach towards the inclination of each other, invigorate every motion of concurrent desire, and fan every spark of kindred curiosity.

It has been justly observed, that discord generally operates in little things; it is inflamed to its utmost vehemence by contrariety of taste, oftener than of principles; and might therefore commonly be avoided by innocent conformity, which, if it was not at first the motive, ought always to be the consequence of indissoluble union.

No. C. SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1751.

Omne vaser vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, et admittus circum præcordia ludit.

PERSIUS.

Horace, with sly insinuating grace,
Laugh'd at his friend, and look'd him in the face;
Would raise a blath where secret vice he found,
And tickle while he gently prob'd the wound.
With seeming innocence the crowd begu'd;
But made the desperate pulses when he fin'd

DRYDEN.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

AS very many well-disposed persons, by the unavoidable necessity of their affairs, are so unfortunate as to be totally buried in the country, where they labour under the most deplorable ignorance of what is transacting among the polite part of mankind, I cannot help thinking that, as a public writer, you should take the case of these truly compassionate objects under your consideration.

These unhappy languishers in obscurity should be furnished with such accounts of the employments of people of the world, as may engage them in their several remote corners to a laudable imitation; or, at least, so far inform and prepare them, that if by any joyful change of situation they should be suddenly transported into the gay scene, they may not gape, and wonder, and stare, and be utterly at a loss how to behave and make a proper appearance in it.

It is inconceivable how much the welfare of all the country towns in the kingdom might be promoted, if you would use your charitable endeavours to raise in them a noble emulation of the manners and customs of higher life.

For this purpose you should give a very clear and ample description of the whole set of polite acquirements; a complete history of forms, fashions, frolics, of routes,

routes, drums, hurricanes, balls, assemblies, ridottos, masquerades, auctions, plays, operas, puppet-shows, and bear-gardens; of all those delights which profitably engage the attention of the most sublime characters, and by which they have brought to such amazing perfection the whole art and mystery of passing day after day, week after week, and year after year, without the heavy assistance of any one thing that formal creatures are pleased to call useful and necessary.

In giving due instructions through what steps to attain this summit of human excellence, you may add such irresistible arguments in its favour as must convince numbers, who in other instances do not seem to want natural understanding, of the unaccountable error of supposing they were sent into the world for any other purpose but to flutter, sport, and shine. For, after all, nothing can be clearer than that an everlasting round of diversion, and the more lively and hurrying the better, is the most important end of human life.

It is really prodigious, so much as the world is improved, that there should in these days be persons so ignorant and stupid as to think it necessary to mis-spent their time, and trouble their heads, about any thing else than pursuing the present fancy; for what else is worth living for!

It is time enough surely to think of consequences when they come; and as for the antiquated notions of duty, they are not to be met with in any French novel, or any book one ever looks into, but derived almost wholly from the writings of authors who lived a vast many ages ago, and who, as they were totally without any idea of those accomplishments which now characterise people of distinction, have been for some time sinking apace into utter contempt. It does not appear that even their most zealous admirers (for some partisans of his own sort every writer will have) can pretend to say they were ever at one ridotto.

In the important article of diversions, the ceremonial of visits, the extatic delight of unfriendly intimacies and unmeaning civilities, they are absolutely silent. Blunt

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truth and downright honesty, plain clothes, staying at home, hard work, few words, and those unenlivened with censure or double meaning, are what they recommend as the ornaments and pleasures of life. Little oaths, polite dissimulation, tea-table scandal, delightful indolence, the glitter of finery, the triumph of precedence, the enchantments of flattery, they seem to have had no notion of; and I cannot but laugh to think what a figure they would have made in a drawing-room, and how frightened they would have looked at a gaming-table.

The noble zeal of patriotism that disdains authority and tramples on laws for sport, was absolutely the aversion of these tame wretches.

Indeed, one cannot discover any one thing they pretend to teach people, but to be wise and good; acquirements infinitely below the consideration of persons of taste and spirit, who know how to spend their time to so much better purpose.

Among other admirable improvements, pray, Mr. Rambler, do not forget to enlarge on the very extensive benefit of playing at cards on Sundays: a practice of such infinite use, that we may modestly expect to see it prevail universally in all parts of this kingdom.

To persons of fashion the advantage is obvious; because, as for some strange reason or other, which no fine gentleman or fine lady has yet been able to penetrate, there is neither play, nor masquerade, nor bottle-conjuror, nor any other thing worth living for, to be had on a Sunday: if it were not for the charitable assistance of whist or bragg, the genteel part of mankind must, one day in seven, necessarily suffer a total extinction of being.

Nor are the persons of high rank the only gainers by so salutary a custom, which extends its good influence, in some degree, to the lower orders of people; but were it quite general, how much better and happier would the world be than it is even now!

It is hard upon poor creatures, be they ever so mean, to deny them those enjoyments and liberties which are
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equally open for all. Yet if servants were taught to go to church on this day, spend some part of it in reading or receiving instruction in a family way, and the rest in mere friendly conversation, the poor wretches would infallibly take it into their heads that they were obliged to be sober, modest, diligent, and faithful to their masters and mistresses.

Now surely no one of common prudence or humanity would wish their domestics infected with such strange and primitive notions, or laid under such unmerciful restraints: all which may, in a great measure, be prevented by the prevalence of the good-humoured fashion that I would have you recommend. For when the lower kind of people see their betters, with a truly laudable spirit, insulting and flying in the face of those rude ill-bred dictators, piety, and the laws, they are thereby excited and admonished, as far as actions can admonish and excite, and taught that they too have an equal right of setting them at defiance in such instances as their particular necessities and inclinations may require; and thus is the liberty of the whole human species mightily improved and enlarged.

In short, Mr. Rambler, by a faithful representation of the numberless benefits of a modest life, you will have done your part in promoting what every body seems to confess the true purpose of human existence, perpetual dissipation.

By encouraging people to employ their whole attention on trifles, and make amusement their sole study, you will teach them how to avoid many very uneasy reflections.

All the soft feelings of humanity, the sympathies of friendship, all natural temptations to the care of a family, and solicitude about the good or ill of others, with the whole train of domestic and social affections, which create such daily anxieties and embarrassments, will be happily stifled and suppressed in a round of perpetual delights; and all serious thoughts, but particularly that of *hereafter*, be banished out of the world: a most perplexing

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ing apprehension, but luckily a most groundless one too,
as it is so very clear a case, that nobody ever dies.

I am, &c.

CHARIESSA.

No. CI. TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1751.

Mella jubet Hybæla tibi vel Hymettia nasci,
Et thyma Cæcropiæ Corfica ponis api. MART.

Alas! dear sir, you try in vain,
Impossibilities to gain;
No bee from Corfica's rank juice,
Hyblæan honey can produce. F. LEWIS.

To the Rambler.

Sir,

HAVING by several years of continual study treasured in my mind a great number of principles and ideas, and obtained by frequent exercise the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readiness, I resolved to quit the university, where I considered myself as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the crowd of public life. I was naturally attracted by the company of those who were of the same age with myself; and finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to jocularity and burlesque. Thus, in a short time, I had heated my imagination to such a state of activity and ebullition, that upon every occasion it fumed away in bursts of wit and evaporations of gaiety. I became on a sudden the idol of the coffee-house; was in one winter solicited to accept the presidentship of five clubs, was dragged by violence to every new play, and quoted in every controversy upon theatrical merit; was in every public place surrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of resort my maxims
and

and my jests, and was boasted as their intimate and companion by many who had no other pretensions to my acquaintance than that they had drank chocolate in the same room.

You will not wonder, Mr. Rambler, that I mention my success with some appearance of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of superiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred by the powers of conversation, by extemporaneous sprightliness of fancy, copiousness of language, and fertility of sentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greater part of the praise is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, spreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleasure or advantage from the diffusion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal sovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himself, and enjoys all the pleasure which he bestows; he finds his power confessed by every one that approaches him, sees friendship kindling with rapture, and attention swelling into praise.

The desire which every man feels of importance and esteem, is so much gratified by finding an assembly at his entrance, brightened with gladness and hushed with expectation, that the recollection of such distinctions can scarcely fail to be pleasing whensoever it is innocent: and my conscience does not reproach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity, since I always employed my influence on the side of virtue, and never sacrificed my understanding or my religion to the pleasure of applause.

There were many whom either the desire of enjoying my pleasantries, or the pride of being thought to enjoy them, brought often into my company; but I was caressed in a particular manner by Demochares, a gentleman of a large estate, and a liberal disposition. My fortune being by no means exuberant, inclined me to be pleased with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became by daily invitations habituated to his table; and, as he believed my acquaintance necessary to the character of elegance which he was desirous of establishing, I lived

in all the luxury of affluence, without expence or dependence, and passed my life in a perpetual reciprocation of pleasure, with men brought together by similitude of accomplishments, or desire of improvement.

But all power has its sphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. Demochares being called by his affairs into the country, imagined that he should encrease his popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whose abilities were so generally allowed. The report presently spread through half the country that Demochares was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated Hilarius, by whom such merriment would be excited as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpose for which I was invited; and as men do not look diligently out for possible miscarriages, was pleased to find myself courted upon principles of interest, and considered as capable of reconciling factions, composing feuds, and uniting a whole province in social happiness.

After a few days spent in adjusting his domestic regulations, Demochares invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my presence was expected to heighten the pleasure of the feast. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raised in my favour, and represented the satisfaction with which he should see me kindle up the blaze of merriment, and should remark the various effects that my fire would have upon such diversity of matter.

This declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with solicitude. I felt an ambition of shining, which I never knew before; and was therefore embarrassed with an unusual fear of disgrace. I passed the night in planning out to myself the conversation of the coming day; recollected all my topics of railery, proposed proper subjects of ridicule, prepared smart replies to a thousand questions, accommodated answers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illustrations.

The morning broke at last in the midst of these busy meditations. I rose with the palpitations of a champion
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on the day of combat; and, notwithstanding all my efforts, found my spirits sunk under the weight of expectation. The company soon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to Hilarius. What conception the inhabitants of this region had formed of a wit, I cannot yet discover; but observed that they all seemed, after the regular exchange of compliments, to turn away disappointed; and that while we waited for dinner they cast their eyes first upon me, and then upon each other, like a theatrical assembly waiting for a show.

From the uneasiness of this situation I was relieved by the dinner; and as every attention was taken up by the business of the hour, I sunk quietly to a level with the rest of the company. But no sooner were the dishes removed, than, instead of cheerful confidence and familiar prattle, an universal silence again shewed their expectation of some unusual performance. My friend endeavoured to rouse them by healths and questions; but they answered him with great brevity, and immediately relapsed into their former taciturnity.

I had waited in hope of some opportunity to divert them, but could find no pass opened for a single fallacy; and who can be merry without an object of mirth! After a few faint efforts, which produced neither applause nor opposition, I was content to mingle with the mass, to put round the glass in silence, and solace myself with my own contemplations.

My friend looked round him; the guests stared at each other; and if now and then a few syllables were uttered with timidity and hesitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleasing, and disposition to be pleased. Thus passed the hours to which so much happiness was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to Hilarius.

At last the night came on, and the necessity of parting freed us from the persecutions of each other. I heard them, as they walked along the court, murmuring at the

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loss of the day, and enquiring whether any man would pay a second visit to a house haunted by a wit.

Demochares, whose benevolence is greater than his penetration, having flattered his hopes with the secondary honour which he was to gain by my sprightliness and elegance, and the affection with which he should be followed for a perpetual banquet of gaiety, was not able to conceal his vexation and resentment, nor would easily be convinced that I had not sacrificed his interest to sullenness and caprice, and studiously endeavoured to disgust his guests, and suppressed my powers of delighting in obstinate and premeditated silence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; some being of opinion, that my friend is deluded by an impostor, who, though he has found some art of gaining his favour, is afraid to speak before men of more penetration; and others concluding, that I think only London the proper theatre of my abilities, and disdain to exert my genius for the praise of rustics.

I believe, Mr. Rambler, that it has sometimes happened to others who have the good or ill fortune to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the same censures upon the like occasions. I hope therefore that you will prevent any misrepresentations of such failures, by remarking, that invention is not wholly at the command of its possessor; that the power of pleasing is very often obstructed by the desire; that all expectation lessens surprize, yet some surprize is necessary to gaiety; and that those who desire to partake of the pleasure of wit must contribute to its production, since the mind stagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy which flashes into transport can be raised only by the infusion of dissimilar ideas.

No. CII. SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1751.

*Ipsa quoque assidua labuntur tempora motu
Non secus ac flumen: neque enim consistere flumen,
Nec levis hora potest; sed ut unda impellitur unda,
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem,
Tempora sic fugiunt pariter, pariterque sequuntur. OVID.*

With constant motion as the moments glide,
Behold in running life the rolling tide!
For none can stem by art, or stop by pow'r,
The flowing ocean, or the fleeting hour:
But wave by wave pursu'd, arrives on shore,
And each impell'd behind impells before:
So time on time revolving we defery;
So minutes follow, and so minutes fly. ELPHINSTON.

LIFE, says Seneca, 'is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasant part of old age.' The perusal of this passage having incited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and on a sudden found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity; but soon recovering myself so far as to enquire whether we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that they were launching out into the *ocean of life*; that we had already passed the straits of infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence, of those who undertook to steer them; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows, with-

out.

out any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choose among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness; and first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure; but no sooner touched, than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands all was darkness, nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked. Before me, and each other side, was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicuous eye could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable; but though it was impossible to sail against it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage; since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with much care or prudence; for by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his comforts every moment sinking round him; and no sooner had the waves closed over them than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence: every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed; nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course; if he turned

aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference, or from weariness of their present condition; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him; and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage; so that every passenger was certain, that how long soever he might, by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been expected to sadden the gay and intimidate the daring, at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the solace of their labours; yet in effect none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrors that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward, but found some amusement for the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with Hope, who was the constant associate of the voyage of life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was, not that they should escape, but that they should sink at last; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for seeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions; for in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she redoubled her assurances of safety; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage than they whom all

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but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of life was the *gulph of Intemperance*, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose, and with shades where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of the rocks all who sailed on the ocean of life must necessarily pass. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet, by which they might escape; but very few could, by her intreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should approach so near unto the rocks of Pleasure, that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the center. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulph was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach of the gulph of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches,

and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some, indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow; but I remarked that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired; nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that they sunk later, and more suddenly; for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the streights of infancy perish in the way, and at last were overset by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure, commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harrassed themselves by labours that scarce Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown power—‘Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?’ I looked; and, seeing the gulph of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

No. CIII. TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1751.

Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri.

JUV.

They search the secrets of the house, and so
Are worshipp'd there, and fear'd for what they know.

DRYDEN.

CURIOSITY is one of the permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intellect. Every advance
into

into knowledge opens new prospects, and produces new incitements to further progress. All the attainments possible in our present state are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment; conquest serves no purpose but that of kindling ambition; discovery has no effect but of raising expectation; the gratification of one desire encourages another; and after all our labours, studies, and enquiries, we are continually at the same distance from the completion of our schemes, have still some wish importunate to be satisfied, and some faculty restless and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The desire of knowledge, though often animated by extrinsic and adventitious motives, seems on many occasions to operate without subordination to any other principle; we are eager to see and hear, without intention of referring our observations to a farther end; we climb a mountain for a prospect of the plain; we run to the strand in a storm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water; we range from city to city, though we profess neither architecture nor fortification; we cross seas only to view nature in nakedness, or magnificence in ruins; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind, by a desert or a palace, a cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude and every thing polished, every thing great and every thing little; we do not see a thicket but with some temptation to enter it, nor remark an insect flying before us but with an inclination to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and enlarged. Lucan therefore introduces Cæsar speaking with dignity suitable to the grandeur of his designs, and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high priest of Egypt that he has no desire equally powerful with that of finding the origin of the Nile, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a sight of those fountains which had been so long concealed. And Homer, when he would furnish the Sirens with a temptation, to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, might
yield

yield without disgrace, makes them declare that none ever departed from them but with increase of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal acquirement which may not be applied to some use, or which may not, at least, gratify pride with occasional superiority; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind, will find that, upon the first appearance of an object, or the first start of a question, his inclination to a nearer view, or more accurate discussion, precedes all thoughts of profit or of competition; and that his desires take wing by instantaneous impulse, though their flight may be invigorated, or their efforts renewed by subsequent considerations. The gratification of curiosity rather frees us from uneasiness than confers pleasure; we are more pained by ignorance than delighted by instruction. Curiosity is the thirst of the soul; it inflames and torments us, and makes us taste every thing with joy, however otherwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earliest searchers after knowledge must have proposed knowledge only as their reward; and that science, though perhaps the nursling of interest, was the daughter of curiosity: for who can believe that they who first watched the course of the stars, foresaw the use of their discoveries to the facilitation of commerce, or the mensuration of time? They were delighted with the splendor of the nocturnal skies, they found that the lights changed their places; what they admired they were anxious to understand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are, indeed, beings in the form of men, who appear satisfied with their intellectual possessions, and seem to live without desire of enlarging their conceptions; before whom the world passes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or by art.

This negligence is sometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant passion: a lover finds no inclination to travel any path but that which leads to the habitation of his mistress; a trader can spare little attention to com-

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It is frequently the consequence of a total immersion in sensuality: corporeal pleasures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happiness is obliterated; the mind, long habituated to a lethargic and quiescent state, is unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking; and, though she may sometimes be disturbed by the obtrusion of new ideas, shrinks back again to ignorance and rest.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual task of procuring the supports of life denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of such as live without the ardour of enquiry is very small, though many content themselves with cheap amusements, and waste their lives in researches of no importance.

There is no snare more dangerous to busy and excursive minds than the cobwebs of petty inquisitiveness, which entangle them in trivial employments and minute studies, and detain them in a middle state between the tediousness of total inactivity and the fatigue of laborious efforts enchant them at once with ease and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The necessity of doing something, and the fear of undertaking much, sinks the historian to a genealogist, the philosopher to a journalist of the weather, and the mathematician to a constructor of dials.

It is happy when those who cannot content themselves to be idle, nor resolve to be industrious, are at least employed without injury to others; but it seldom happens that we can contain ourselves long in a neutral state, or forbear to sink into vice, when we are no longer soaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was distinguished in his earlier years by an uncommon liveliness of imagination, quickness of sagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life he applied himself with particular inquisitiveness to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different
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modifications of interest and ambition, and the various causes of miscarriage and success, both in public and private affairs.

Though his friends did not discover to what purpose all these observations were collected, or how Nugaculus would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an incessant attention to changes of countenance, bursts of inconsideration, sallies of passion, and all the other casualties by which he used to trace a character, yet they could not deny the study of human nature to be worthy of a wise man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his discoveries, and listened with submissive modesty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakness of resolves, and the instability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling passion.

Such was the first incitement of Nugaculus to a close inspection into the conduct of mankind. He had no interest in view, and therefore no design of supplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expose them; but having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himself, but has passed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every rising character, and lived upon a small estate without any thought of encreasing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general master of secret history, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and stratagems, of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's estate, the terms upon which every spendthrift raises his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure stipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maiden aunts and childless acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every house, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his steward; he can tell where the manor-house is falling, though large sums are yearly paid for repairs; and
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where the tenants are felling woods without the consent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence he is inadvertently guilty of a thousand acts of treachery. He sees no man's servant without draining him of his trust; he enters no family without flattering the children into discoveries; he is a perpetual spy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows, by long experience, at whatever distance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and therefore his industry has not hitherto been very mischievous to others, or dangerous to himself; but since he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by discovering it, and if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffic like the chymists, and purchase one secret with another; he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is considered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happiness in his power; and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at first, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declension of minuteness, betrayed Nugaculus, not only to a foolish, but vicious waste of a life which might have been honourably passed in public services, or domestic virtues. He has lost his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engross, but do not improve it.

NO. CIV. SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1751.

—Nihil est quod credere de se
Non possit— JUVENAL.

None e'er rejects hyperbolies of praise.

THE apparent insufficiency of every individual to his own happiness or safety, compels us to seek from one another assistance and support. The necessity of joint efforts

efforts for the execution of any great or extensive design, the variety of powers disseminated in the species, and the proportion between the defects and excellencies of different persons, demand an interchange of help and communication of intelligence, and by frequent reciprocations of beneficence unite mankind in society and friendship.

If it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a state of equality, without distinction of rank, or peculiarity of possessions, it is reasonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his strength or his skill to the supply of natural wants; there was then little room for peevish dislike or capricious favour: the affection admitted into the heart was rather esteem than tenderness; and kindness was only purchased by benefits. But when by force of policy, by wisdom, or by fortune, property and superiority were introduced and established, so that many were condemned to labour for the support of a few, then they whose possessions swelled above their wants, naturally laid out their superfluities upon pleasure; and those who could not gain friendship by necessary offices, endeavoured to promote their interest by luxurious gratifications, and to create need which they might be courted to supply.

The desires of mankind are much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination much larger than actual enjoyment. Multitudes are therefore unsatisfied with their allotment; and he that hopes to improve his condition by the favour of another, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himself excelled by his rivals, will, by other expedients, endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the *art of pleasing* among the most useful studies, and most valuable acquisitions.

This art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its usefulness, and will always flourish most where it is most rewarded; for this reason we find it practised with great assiduity under absolute governments, where ho-

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nours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who soon become so much accustomed to compliance and officiousness, as not easily to find, in the most delicate address, that novelty which is necessary to procure attention.

It is discovered by a very few experiments, that no man is much pleased with a companion, who does not encrease, in some respect, his fondness of himself; and, therefore, he that wishes rather to be led forward to prosperity by the gentle hand of favour, than to force his way by labour and merit, must consider with more care how to display his patron's excellencies than his own; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleasing dreams; and chase away disgust and weariness by a perpetual succession of delightful images.

This may, indeed, sometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really possessed, or upon prospects which reason spreads before hope; for whoever can deserve or require to be courted, has generally, either from nature or from fortune, gifts which he may review with satisfaction, and of which, when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will seldom be displeased.

But those who have once degraded their understanding to an application only to the passions, and who have learned to derive hope from any other sources than industry and virtue, seldom retain dignity and magnanimity sufficient to defend them against the constant recurrence of temptation to falsehood. He that is too desirous to be loved, will soon learn to flatter, and when he has exhausted all the variations of honest praise, and can delight no longer with the civility of truth, he will invent new tropicks of panegyrick, and break out into raptures at virtues and beauties conferred by himself.

The drudgeries of dependance would, indeed, be aggravated by hopelessness of success, if no indulgence was allowed to adulation. He that will obstinately confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deserves, will soon be forced to give way to others that regale him with more compass of musick. The greatest human

virtue bears no proportion to human vanity. We always think ourselves better than we are, and are generally desirous that others should think us still better than we think ourselves. To praise us for actions or dispositions which deserve praise, is not to confer a benefit, but to pay a tribute. We have always pretensions to fame, which, in our own hearts, we know to be disputable, and which we are desirous to strengthen by a new suffrage; we have always hopes which we suspect to be fallacious, and of which we eagerly snatch at every confirmation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the first approaches under the conduct of truth, and to secure credit to future encomiums by such praise as may be ratified by the conscience; but the mind once habituated to the lusciousness of eulogy, becomes, in a short time, nice and fastidious, and, like a vitiated palate, is incessantly calling for higher gratifications.

It is scarcely credible to what degree discernment may be dazzled by the mist of pride, and wisdom infatuated by the intoxication of flattery; or how low the genius may descend by successive gradations of servility, and how swiftly it may fall down the precipice of falsehood. No man can, indeed, observe, without indignation, on what names, both of ancient and modern times, the utmost exuberance of praise has been lavished, and by what hands it has been bestowed. It has never yet been found, that the tyrant, the plunderer, the oppressor, the most hateful of the hateful, the most profligate of the profligate, have been denied any celebrations which they were willing to purchase, or that wickedness and folly have not found correspondent flatterers through all their subordinations, except when they have been associated with avarice or poverty, and have wanted either inclination or ability to hire a panegyrist.

As there is no character so deformed as to fright away from it the prostitutes of praise, there is no degree of encomiastick veneration which pride has refused. The emperors of Rome suffered themselves to be worshipped in their lives with altars and sacrifices; and in an age more enlightened, the terms peculiar to the praise and
worship

worship of the Supreme Being have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and whom nothing but riches or power hindered those that read or wrote their dedication, from hunting into the toils of justice; as disturbers of the peace of nature.

There are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who must be resigned to infamy without vindication, and whom we must confess to have deserted the cause of virtue for pay: they have committed, against full conviction, the crime of obliterating the distinctions between good and evil; and instead of opposing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progress, and celebrated her conquests. But there is a lower class of sycophants, whose understanding has not made them capable of equal guilt. Every man of high rank is surrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action than his maxims and his conduct; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance reconciles to all his vices, and all his absurdities; and who easily persuade themselves to esteem him, by whose regard they consider themselves as distinguished and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themselves within the sphere of greatness. Stupidity is soon blinded by the splendor of wealth, and cowardice is easily fettered in the shackles of dependance. To solicit patronage is, at least in the event, to set virtue to sale. None can be pleased without praise, and few can be praised without falsehood; few can be assiduous without servility, and none can be servile without corruption.

No. CV. TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1751.

—Animorum

Impulsi, et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ducti.

Juv.

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resign'd;
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.

I WAS lately considering, among other objects of speculation, the new attempt of an *universal register*, an office in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once it's reputation shall be so established, that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desperation, nor it's informations suspected as the fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied, where every lawful passion may find it's gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction; where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together; and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation; must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of others. Nor will it be an uninstruſting school to the greatest masters of method and dispatch, if such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrassment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project, and filling my thoughts with it's regulation, it's conveniences, it's variety, and it's consequences, I sunk gradually into
slumber;

slumber; but the same images, though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were passing without confusion; every face on which I fixed my eyes seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained a while in the unpleasing state of an idler, where all other beings were busy, giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-loved protectress, Curiosity. 'Great goddess,' said I, 'may thy votary be permitted to implore thy favour? If thou hast been my directress from the first dawn of reason, if I have followed thee through the maze of life with invariable fidelity, if I have turned to every new call, and quitted at thy nod one pursuit for another, if I have never stopped at the invitations of fortune, nor forgot thy authority in the bowers of pleasure, inform me now whither chance has conducted me.'

'Thou art now,' replied the smiling power, 'in the presence of Justice, and of Truth, whom the father of gods and men has sent down to register the demands and pretensions of mankind, that the world may at last be reduced to order, and that none may complain hereafter of being doomed to tasks for which they are unqualified, or possessing faculties for which they cannot find employment, or virtues that languish unobserved for want of opportunities to exert them, of being encumbered with superfluities which they would willingly resign, or of wasting away in desires which ought to be satisfied. Justice is now to examine every man's wishes, and Truth is to record them; let us approach, and observe the progress of this great transaction.'

She then moved forward; and Truth, who knew her amongst the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her

to advance, till we were placed near the seat of Justice. The first who required the assistance of the office came forward with a slow pace, and tumour of dignity, and, shaking a weighty purse in his hand, demanded to be registered by Truth, as the Mæcenas of the present age, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or distress with certainty of succour. Justice very mildly enquired, whether he had calculated the expence of such a declaration? whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would swarm about him? whether he could distinguish idleness and negligence from calamity, ostentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To these questions he seemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his desire to be recorded as a patron. Justice then offered to register his proposal on these conditions; that he should never suffer himself to be flattered; that he should never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he should never encourage followers without intending to reward them. These terms were too hard to be accepted; 'For what,' said he, 'is the end of patronage, but the pleasure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in suspense, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety; flattering them to assiduity, and at last dismissing them for impatience?' Justice heard his confession, and ordered his name to be posted upon the gate among cheats, and robbers, and public nuisances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the discoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and sciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of punishment, pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

Justice and Truth did not trouble this great adept with many enquiries; but finding his address awkward, and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be registered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might

serve

serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very grave and philosophick aspect required notice to be giving of his intention to set out, a certain day on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price at which they might sail above water. His desire was granted, and he retired to a convenient stand, in expectation of filling his ship, and growing rich in a short time by the secrecy, safety, and expedition of the passage.

Another desired to advertise the curious, that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical instrument, by which those who laid out their industry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might observe the direction of the weathercocks on the hither-side of the lunar world.

Another wished to be known as the author of an invention by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a single fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation, without any inconvenience, till the water should subside. Justice considered these projects as of no importance but to their authors, and therefore scarcely condescended to examine them; but Truth refused to admit them into the register.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of an universal medicine, by which all diseases might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of Nestor. But Justice informed them, that one universal medicine was sufficient, and she would delay the notification till she saw who could longest preserve his own life.

A thousand other claims and offers were exhibited and examined. I remarked, among this mighty multitude, that, of intellectual advantages, many had great exuberance, and few confessed any want; of every art there were a hundred professors for a single pupil; but of other attainments, such as riches, honours, and preferments I found none that had too much, but thousands and ten
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thousands that thought themselves intitled to a larger dividend.

It often happened, that old misers, and women, married at the close of life, advertised their want of children; nor was it uncommon for those who had a numerous offspring, to give notice of a son or daughter to be spared; but though appearances promised well on both sides, the bargain seldom succeeded; for they soon lost their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote some scheme of publick charity: a thousand proposals were immediately made, among which they hesitated till death precluded the decision.

As I stood looking on this scene of confusion, Truth condescended to ask me, what was my business at her office? I was struck with the unexpected question, and awaked by my efforts to answer it.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.